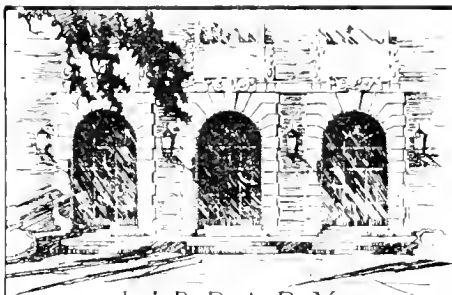




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IN ALL SHADES

A Novel

BY

GRANT ALLEN

AUTHOR OF 'BABYLON' 'STRANGE STORIES' ETC.



IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III.

London

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IN ALL SHADES.

CHAPTER XXIX

DELGADO had fixed the great and terrible day of the Lord for Wednesday evening. On Monday afternoon, Harry and Nora, accompanied by Mr. Dupuy, went for a ride in the cool of dusk among the hills together. Trinidad that day was looking its very best. The tall and feathery bamboos that overhung the serpentine pathways stood out in exquisite clearness of outline, like Japanese designs, against the tender background of pearl-grey sky. The tree

ferns rose lush and green among the bracken after yesterday's brief and refreshing thunder-shower. The scarlet hibiscus trees beside the negro huts were in the full blush of their first flowering season. The poinsettias, not, as in England, mere stiff standard plants from florists' cuttings, but rising proudly into graceful trees of free and rounded growth, with long drooping branches, spread all about their great rosettes of crimson leaflets to the gorgeous dying sunlight. The broad green foliage of the ribbed bananas in the negro gardens put to shame the flimsy tropical make-believes of Kew or Monte Carlo. For the first time, it seemed to Harry Noel, he was riding through the true and beautiful tropics of poets and painters; and the reason was not difficult to guess, for Nora

—Nora really seemed to be more kindly disposed to him. After all, she was not made of stone, and they had an interest in common which the rest of the house of Dupuy did not share with Nora—the interest in Edward and Marian Hawthorn. You can't have a better introduction to any girl's heart—though I dare say it may be very wicked indeed to acknowledge it—than a common attachment to somebody or something tabooed or opposed by the parental authorities.

Mr. Dupuy rode first in the little single-file cavalcade, as became the^r senior; and Mr. Dupuy's cob had somehow a strange habit of keeping fifty yards ahead of the other horses, which gave its owner on this particular occasion no little trouble. Harry and Nora followed behind at a respectful

distance; and Harry, who had bought a new horse of his own the day before, and who brought up the rear on his fresh mount, seemed curiously undesirous of putting his latest purchase through its paces, as one might naturally have expected him to do under the circumstances. On the contrary, he hung about behind most unconscionably, delaying Nora by every means in his power; and Mr. Dupuy, looking back from his cob every now and again, grew almost weary of calling out a dozen times over: ‘Now then, Nora, you can canter up over this little bit of level, and catch me up, can’t you, surely?’

‘If it weren’t for the old gentleman,’ Harry thought to himself more than once, ‘I really think I should take this opportunity of speaking again to Nora’—he

always called her 'Nora' in his own heart—a well-known symptom of the advanced stages of the disease—though she was of course 'Miss Dupuy' alone in conversation. 'Or even if we were on a decent English road, now, where you can ride two abreast, and have a *tête-à-tête* quite as comfortably as in an ordinary drawing-room! But it's clearly impossible to propose to a girl when she's riding a whole horse's length in front of you on a one-horse pathway. You can't shout out to her: "My beloved, I adore you," at the top of your voice, as they do at the opera, especially with her own father—presumably devoted to the rival interest—hanging a hundred yards ahead within moderate earshot.' So Harry was compelled to repress for the present his ardent declaration, and continue talking to

Nora Dupuy about Edward and Marian, a subject which, as he acutely perceived, was more likely to bring them into sympathy with one another than any alternative theme he could possibly have hit upon.

Presently, they descended again upon the plain, and Mr. Dupuy was just about to rejoin them in a narrow lane, almost wide enough for three abreast, and bordered by a prickly hedge of cactus and pinguin, when, to Nora's great surprise, Tom Dupuy, on his celebrated chestnut mare Sambo Gal, came cantering up in the opposite direction, as if on purpose to catch and meet them. Tom wasn't often to be found away from his canes at that time of day, and Nora had very little doubt indeed that he had caught a glimpse of Harry and herself from Pimento Valley, on the zigzag

mountain path, without noticing her father on in front of them, and had ridden out with the express intention of breaking in upon their supposed *tête-à-tête*.

Mr. Dupuy unconsciously prevented him from carrying out this natural design. Meeting his nephew first in the narrow pathway, he was just going to make him turn round and ride alongside with him, when Nora, seized with a sudden fancy, half whispered to Harry Noel: 'I'm not going to ride with Tom Dupuy; I can't endure him; I shall turn and ride back in the opposite direction.'

'We must tell your father,' Harry said hesitating.

'Of course,' Nora answered decidedly.—
'Papa,' she continued, raising her voice,
'we're going to ride back again and round

by Delgado's hut, you know—the mountain-cabbage palm-tree way is so much prettier, and I want to show it to Mr. Noel. You and Tom Dupuy can turn round and follow us.—The cob always goes ahead, you see, Mr. Noel, if once he's allowed to get in front of the other horses.'

They turned back once more in this reversed order, Nora and Harry Noel leading the way, and Mr. Dupuy, abreast with Tom, following behind somewhat angrily, till they came to a point in the narrow lane where a gap in the hedge led into a patch of jungle on the right-hand side. An old negro had crept out of it just before them, carrying on his head, poised quite evenly, a big faggot of sticks for his out-door fireplace. The old man kept the middle of the lane, just in front of them,

and made not the slightest movement to right or left, as if he had no particular intention of allowing them to pass. Harry had just given his new horse a tap with the whip, and they were trotting along to get well in front of the two followers, so he didn't greatly relish this untoward obstacle thrown so unexpectedly in his way. 'Get out of the road, will you, you there!' he shouted angrily. 'Don't you see a lady's coming? Stand aside this minute, my good fellow, and let her pass, I tell you.'

Delgado turned around, almost as the horse's nose was upon him, and looking the young man defiantly in the face, answered with an obvious sneer: 'Who is you, sah, dat you speak to me like-a dat? Dis is de Queen high-road, for naygur an' for buckra.

You doan't got no right at all to turn me off it.'

Harry recognised his man at once, and the hot temper of the Lincolnshire Noels boiled up within him. He hit out at the fellow with his riding-whip viciously. Delgado didn't attempt to dodge the blow—a negro never does—but merely turned his head haughtily, so that the bundle of sticks pushed hard against the horse's nose, and set it bleeding with the force of the sudden turn. Delgado knew it would: the sticks, in fact, were prickly acacia. The horse plunged and reared a little, and backed up in fright against the cactus hedge. The sharp cactus spines and the long aloe-like needles of the pinguin leaves in the hedgerow goaded his flank severely as he backed against them. He gave another plunge, and hit up wildly

against Nora's mount. Nora kept her seat bravely, but with some difficulty. Harry was furious. Forgetting himself entirely, he knocked the bundle of sticks off the old man's head with a sudden swish of his thick riding-crop, and then proceeded to lay the whip twice or three times about Delgado's ears with angry vehemence. To his great surprise, Delgado stood, erect and motionless, as if he didn't even notice the blows. Appeased by what he took to be the man's submissiveness, Harry dug his heel into his horse's side and hurried forward to rejoin Nora, who had ridden ahead hastily to avoid the turmoil.

‘He's an ill-conditioned, rude, bad-blooded fellow, that nigger there,’ he said apologetically to his pretty companion. ‘I know him before. He's the very same man I told you

of the other evening, that wouldn't pick my whip up for me the first day I came to Trinidad. I'm glad he's had a taste of it to-day for his continual impudence.'

'He'll have you up for assault, you may be sure, Mr. Noel,' Nora answered earnestly. 'And if Mr. Hawthorn tries the case, he'll give it against you, for he'll never allow any white man to strike a negro. The man's name is Delgado; he's an African, you know—an imported African—and a regular savage; and he had a fearful quarrel once with papa and Tom Dupuy about the wages, which papa has never forgiven. But Mr. Hawthorn *does* say'—and Nora dropped her voice a little—'that he's really had a great deal of provocation, and that Tom Dupuy behaved abominably, which of course is very probable, for what can you expect from Tom Dupuy, Mr. Noel?—'

But still'—and this she said very loudly—
'all the negroes themselves will tell you that
Louis Delgado's a regular rattlesnake, and
you must put your foot firmly down upon
him if you want to crush him.'

'If you put your foot on rattlesnake,'
Louis Delgado cried aloud from behind, in
angry accents, 'you crush rattlesnake; but
rattlesnake sting you, so you die.' And then
he muttered to himself in lower tones: 'An'
de rattlesnake has got sting in him tail dat
will hurt dat mulatto man from Englan', still,
dat tink himself proper buckra.'

Tom Dupuy and his uncle had just
reached the spot when Louis Delgado said
angrily to himself, in negro soliloquy, this
damning sentence. Tom reined in and looked
smilingly at his uncle as Delgado said it.
'So you know something, too, about this

confounded Englishman, you damned nigger you !' he said condescendingly. ' You've found out that our friend Noel's a woolly-headed mulatto, have you, Delgado ?'

Louis Delgado's eyes sparkled with gratified malevolence as he answered with a cunning smile : ' Aha, Mistah Tom Dupuy, you glad to hear dat, sah ! You want to get some information from de poor naygur dis ebenin', do you ? No, no, sah ; de Dupuys an' me, we is not fren' ; we is at variance one wit de odder. I doan't gwine to tell you nuffin' at all, sah, about de buckra from Englan'. But when mule kick too much, I say to him often : " Ha, ha, me fren', you is too proud. You tink you is horse. I s'pose you doan't rightly remember dat your own fader wasn't nuffin' but a common jackass ! " '

He loved to play with both his intended

victims at once, as a cat plays with a captured mouse before she kills it. Keep him in suspense as long as you can—that's the point of the game. Dandle him, and torture him, and hold him off; but never tell him the truth outright, for good or for evil, as long as you can possibly help it.

‘Do you really know anything,’ Tom Dupuy asked eagerly, ‘or are you only guessing, like all the rest of us? Do you mean to tell me you’ve got any proof that the fellow’s a nigger?—Come, come, Delgado, we may have quarrelled, but you needn’t be nasty about it. I’ve got a grudge against this man Noel, and I don’t mind paying you liberally for anything you can tell me against him.’

But Delgado shook his head doggedly. ‘I doan’t want your money, sah,’ he an-

swered with a slow drawl; ‘I want more dan your money, if I want anyting. But I doan’t gwine to help you agin me own colour. Buckra for buckra, an’ colour for colour! If you want to find out about him, why doan’t you write to de buckra gentlemen over in Barbadoes?’

He kept the pair of white men there, dawdling and parleying, for twenty minutes nearly, while Harry and Nora went riding away alone towards the mountain cabbage-palms. It pleased Delgado thus to be able to hold the two together on the tenter-hooks of suspense—to exercise his power before the two buckras. At last, Tom Dupuy condescended to direct entreaty. ‘Delgado,’ he said with much magnanimity, ‘you know I don’t often ask a favour of a nigger—it ain’t the way with us Dupuys; it don’t run in the

family—but still, I ask you as a personal favour to tell me whatever you know about this matter : I have reasons of my own which make me ask you as a personal favour.'

Delgado's eyes glistened horribly. ' Buck-ra,' he answered with a hideous grin, dropping all the usual polite formulas, ' I will tell you for true den ; I will tell you all about it. Dat man Noel is son ob brown gal from ole Barbadoes. Her name is Budleigh, an' her fam'ly is brown folks dat lib at place dem call de Wilderness. I hear all about dem from Isaac Pourtalès. Pourtalès an' dis man Noel, dem is bot' cousin. De man is brown just same like Isaac Pourtalès !'

' By George, Uncle Tom !' Tom Dupuy cried exultantly, ' Delgado's right—right to the letter. Pourtalès is a Barbadoes man : his father was one of the Pourtalèses of this

island who settled in Barbadoes, and his mother must have been one of these brown Budleighs. Noel told us himself the other day his mother was a Budleigh—a Budleigh of the Wilderness. He's been over in Barbadoes looking after their property.—By Jove, Delgado, I'd rather have a piece of news like that than a hundred pounds!—We shall stick a pin, after all, Uncle Theodore, in that confounded, stuck-up, fal-lal mulatto-man.'

'It's too late to follow them up by the mountain-cabbages,' Mr. Theodore Dupuy exclaimed with an anxious sigh—how did he know but that at that very moment this undoubted brown man might be proposing (hang his impudence) to his daughter Nora?—'it's too late to follow them, if we mean to dress for dinner. We must go home straight

by the road, and even then we won't overtake them before they're back at Orange Grove, I'm afraid, Tom.'

Delgado stood in the middle of the lane and watched them retreating at an easy canter ; then he solemnly replaced the bundle of sticks on the top of his head, spread out his hands and fingers in the most expressively derisive African attitudes, and began to dance with wild glee a sort of imaginary triumphal war-dance over his intended slaughter. 'Ha, ha,' he cried aloud, 'Wednesday ebenin'—Wednesday ebenin'! De great and terrible day ob de Lard comin' for true on Wednesday ebenin'! Slay, slay, slay, sait' de Lard, an' leave not one libbin' soul behind in de land ob de Amalekites. Dat is de first an' de last good turn I ebber gwine to do for Tom

Dupuy, for certain. I doan't want his money, I tell him, but I want de blood ob him. On Wednesday night I gwine to get it. Ha, ha, de Lard is wit us! We gwine to slay de remnant ob de accursed Amalekites.' He paused a moment, and poised the bundle more evenly on his head; then he went on walking homewards more quietly, but talking to himself aloud, in a clear, angry, guttural voice, as negroes will do, under the influence of powerful excitement. 'What for I doan't tell dat man Noel himself dat he is mulatto when him hit me?' he asked himself with rhetorical earnestness. 'Becase I doan't want to go an' spoil de fun ob de whole discovery. If *I* tell him, dat doan't nuffin'—even before de missy. Tom Dupuy is proper buckra: he hate Noel, an' Noel hate him! He gwine to tell it so it sting Noel. He gwine to dis-

grace dat proud man before de buckras an' before de missy !'

He paused again, and chewed violently for a minute or two at a piece of cane he pulled out of his pocket ; then he spat out the dry refuse with a fierce explosion of laughter, and went on again : ' But I doan't gwine to punish Noel like I gwine to punish de Dupuys an' de missy. Noel is fren' ob Mistah Hawthorn, de fren' ob de naygur : dat gwine to be imputed to him for righteousness, when de Lard's time comin'. In de great an' terrible day ob de Lard, de angel gwine to pass ober Noel, same as him pass ober de house ob Israel ; but de house ob de Dupuy shall perish utterly, like de house ob Pharaoh, an' like de house ob Saul king ob Israel, whose seed was destroyed out ob de land, so dat not one ob dem left libbin'.'

CHAPTER XXX.

‘THIS is awkward, Tom, awfully awkward,’ Mr. Theodore Dupuy said to his nephew as they rode homeward. ‘We must manage somehow to get rid of this man as early as possible. Of course, we can’t keep him in the house any longer with your cousin Nora, now that we know he’s really nothing more—baronet or no baronet—than a common mulatto. But at the same time, you see, we can’t get rid of him anyhow by any possibility before the dinner to-morrow evening. I’ve asked several of the best people in Trinidad especially to meet him, and I don’t want to

go and stultify myself openly before the eyes of the whole island. What the dickens can we do about it ? ’

‘ If you’d taken my advice, Uncle Theodore,’ Tom Dupuy answered sullenly, in spite of his triumph, ‘ you’d have got rid of him long ago. As it is, you’ll have to keep him on now till after Tuesday, and then we must manage somehow to dismiss him politely.’

They rode on without another word till they reached the house ; there, they found Nora and Harry had arrived before them, and had gone in to dress for dinner. Mr. Dupuy followed their example ; but Tom, who had made up his mind suddenly to stop, loitered about on the lawn under the big star-apple tree, waiting in the cool till the young Englishman should make his appearance.

Meanwhile, Nora, in her own dressing-room, attended by Rosina Fleming and Aunt Clemmy, was thinking over the afternoon's ride very much to her own satisfaction. Mr. Noel was really after all a very nice fellow: if he hadn't been so dreadfully dark—but there, he was really just one shade too dusky in the face ever to please a West Indian fancy. And yet, he was certainly very much in love with her! The very persistence with which he avoided reopening the subject, while he went on paying her such very marked attention, showed in itself how thoroughly in earnest he was. 'He'll propose to me again to-morrow—I'm quite sure he will,' Nora thought to herself, as Rosina fastened up her hair with a sprig of plumbago and a little delicate spray of wild maiden-hair. 'He was almost going to

propose to me as we came along by the mountain-cabbages this afternoon, only I saw him hesitating, and I turned the current of the conversation. I wonder why I turned it? I'm sure I don't know why. I wonder whether it was because I didn't know whether I should answer "Yes" or "No," if he were really to ask me? I think one ought to decide in one's own mind beforehand what one's going to say in such a case, especially when a man has asked one already. He's awfully nice. I wish he was just a shade or two lighter. I believe Tom really fancies—he's so dark—it isn't quite right with him.'

Isaac Pourtalès, lounging about that minute, watching for Rosina, whom he had come to talk with, saw Nora flit for a second past the open window of the passage, in her light and gauze-like evening dress, with open

neck in front, and the flowers twined in her pretty hair; and he said to himself as he glanced up at her: ‘De word ob de Lard say right, “Take captive de women!”’

At the same moment, Tom Dupuy, strolling idly on the lawn in the thickening twilight, caught sight of Pourtalès, and beckoned him towards him with an imperious finger. ‘Come here,’ he said; ‘I want to talk with you, you nigger there.—You’re Isaac Pourtalès, aren’t you?—I thought so. Then come and tell me all you know about this confounded cousin of yours—this man Noel.’

Isaac Pourtalès, nothing loth, poured forth at once in Tom Dupuy’s listening ear the whole story, so far as he knew it, of Lady Noel’s antecedents in Barbadoes. While the two men, the white and the brown, were still

conversing under the shade of the star-apple tree, Nora, who had come down to the drawing-room meanwhile, strolled out for a minute, beguiled by the cool air, on to the smoothly kept lawn in front of the drawing-room window. Tom saw her, and beckoned her to him with his finger, exactly as he had beckoned the tall mulatto. Nora gazed at the beckoning hand with the intensest disdain, and then turned away, as if perfectly unconscious of his ungainly gesture, to examine the tube-roses and great bell-shaped brugmansias of the garden border.

Tom walked up to her angrily and rudely. ‘Didn’t you see me calling you, miss?’ he said in his harsh drawl, with no pretence of unnecessary politeness. ‘Didn’t you see I wanted to speak to you?’

‘I saw you making signs to somebody

with your hand, as if you took me for a servant,' Nora answered coldly; 'and not having been accustomed in England to be called in that way, I thought you must have made a mistake as to whom you were dealing with.'

Tom started and muttered an ugly oath. 'In England,' he repeated. 'Oh, ah, in England. West Indian gentlemen, it seems, aren't good enough for you, miss, since this fellow Noel has come out to make up to you. I suppose you don't happen to know that he's a West Indian too, and a precious rum sort of one into the bargain? I know you mean to marry him, miss; but all I can tell you is, your father and I are not going to permit it.'

'I don't wish to marry him,' Nora answered, flushing fiery red all over ('Him is pretty for true when him blush like dat,'

Isaac Pourtalès said to himself from the shade of the star-apple tree). ‘But if I did, I wouldn’t listen to anything *you* might choose to say against him, Tom Dupuy ; so that’s plain speaking enough for you.’

Tom sneered. ‘O no,’ he said ; ‘I always knew you’d end by marrying a woolly-headed mulatto ; and this man’s one, I don’t mind telling you. He’s a brown man born ; his mother, though she *is* Lady Noel—fine sort of a Lady, indeed—is nothing better than a Barbadoes brown girl ; and he’s own cousin to Isaac Pourtalès over yonder ! He is, I swear to you—Isaac, come here, sir !’

Nora gave a little suppressed scream of surprise and horror as the tall mulatto, in his ragged shirt, leering horribly, emerged unexpectedly, like a black spectre, from the shadows opposite.

‘Isaac,’ the young planter said with a malicious smile, ‘who is this young man, I want to know, that calls himself *Mister* Noel?’

Isaac Pourtalès touched his slouching hat awkwardly as he answered, under his breath, with an ugly scowl: ‘Him me own cousin, sah, an’ me mudder cousin. Him an’ me mudder is fam’ly long ago in ole Barbadoes.’

‘There you are, Nora!’ Tom Dupuy cried out to her triumphantly. ‘You see what sort of person your fine English friend has turned out to be.

‘Tom Dupuy,’ Nora cried in her wrath—but in her own heart she knew it wasn’t true—‘if you tell me this, trying to set me against Mr. Noel, you’ve failed in your purpose, sir: what you say has no effect upon me. I do not care for him; you are quite

mistaken about that ; but if I did, I don't mind telling you, your wicked scheming would only make me like him all the better. Tom Dupuy, no real gentleman would ever try so to undermine another man's position.'

At that moment, Harry Noel, just descending to the drawing-room, strolled out to meet them on the lawn, quite unconscious of this little family altercation. Nora glanced hastily from Tom Dupuy, in his planter coat and high riding-boots, to Harry Noel, looking so tall and handsome in his evening dress, and couldn't help noticing in her own mind which of the two was the truest gentleman. 'Mr. Noel,' she said, accepting his half-proffered arm with a natural and instinctive gracious movement, 'will you take me in to dinner? I see it's ready.'

Tom Dupuy, crestfallen and astonished,

followed after, and muttered to himself with deeper conviction than ever that he always knew that girl Nora would end in the long run by marrying a confounded woolly-headed mulatto.

CHAPTER XXXI.

NEXT day was Tuesday ; and to Louis Delgado and his friends at least, the days were now well worth counting ; for was not the hour of the Lord's deliverance fixed for eight o'clock on Wednesday evening ?

Nora, too, had some reason to count the days for her own purposes, for on Tuesday night they were to have a big dinner-party—the biggest undertaken at Orange Grove since Nora had first returned to her father's house in the capacity of hostess. Mr. Dupuy, while still uncertain about Harry Noel's precise colour, had thought it well—giving him the benefit of the doubt—to invite all the

neighbouring planters to meet the distinguished member of the English aristocracy: it reminded him, he said, of those bygone days when Port-of-Spain was crowded with carriages, and Trinidad was still one of the brightest jewels in the British crown (a period perfectly historical in every English colony all the world over, and usually placed about the date when the particular speaker for the time being was just five-and-twenty).

That Tuesday morning, as fate would have it, Mr. Dupuy had gone with the buggy into Port-of-Spain for the very prosaic purpose—let us fain confess it—of laying in provisions for the night's entertainment. In a country where the fish for your evening's dinner must all have been swimming about merrily in the depths of the sea at eight o'clock the same morning, where your leg of

mutton must have been careering joyously in guileless innocence across the grassy plain, and your chicken cutlets must have borne their part in investigating the merits of the juicy caterpillar while you were still loitering over late breakfast, the question of commissariat is of course a far less simple one than in our own well-supplied and market-stocked England. To arrange beforehand that a particular dusky fisherman shall stake his life on the due catching and killing of a turtle for the soup on that identical morning and no other ; that a particular oyster-woman shall cut the bivalves for the oyster sauce from the tidal branches of the mangrove swamp not earlier than three or later than five in the afternoon, on her honour as a purveyor ; and that a particular lounging negro coffee-planter somewhere on the hills shall guarantee a sufficient supply

of black landcrabs for not less than fourteen persons—turtle and oyster and crab being all as yet in the legitimate enjoyment of their perfect natural freedom—all this, I say, involves the possession of strategical faculties of a high order, which would render a man who has once kept house in the West Indies perfectly capable of undertaking the *res frumentaria* for an English army on one of its innumerable slaughtering picnics, for the extension of the blessings of British rule among a totally new set of black, benighted, and hitherto happy heathen. Now Mr. Dupuy was a model entertainer, of the West Indian pattern ; and having schemed and devised all these his plans beforehand with profound wisdom, he had now gone into Port-of-Spain with the buggy, on hospitable thoughts intent, to bring out whatever he could get, and make

arrangements, by means of tinned provisions from England, for the inevitable deficiencies which always turn up under such circumstances at the last moment. So Harry and Nora were left alone quite to themselves for the whole morning.

The veranda of the house—it fronted on the back garden at Orange Grove—is always the pleasantest place in which to sit during the heat of the day in a West Indian household. The air comes so delightfully fresh through the open spaces of the creeper-covered trellis-work, and the humming-birds buzz about so merrily among the crimson passion-flowers under your very eyes, and the banana bushes whisper so gently before the delicate fanning of the cool sea-breezes in the leafy courtyard, that you lie back dreamily in your folding-chair and half believe yourself, for

once in your life, in the poet's Paradise. On such a veranda Harry Noel and Nora Dupuy sat together that Tuesday morning ; Harry pretending to read a paper, which lay, however, unfolded on his knees—what does one want with newspapers in Paradise?—and Nora almost equally pretending to busy herself, Penelope-like, with a wee square of dainty crewel work, concerning which it need only be said that one small flower appeared to take a most unconscionable and incredible time for its proper shaping. They were talking together as young man and maiden will talk to one another idly under such circumstances—circling half unconsciously round and round the object of both their thoughts, she avoiding it, and he perpetually converging towards it, till at last, like a pair of silly, fluttering moths around the flame of the candle, they find them-

selves finally landed, by a sudden side-flight, in the very centre at an actual declaration.

‘Really,’ Harry said at length, at a pause in the conversation, ‘this is positively too delicious, Miss Dupuy, this sunshine and breeziness. How the light glances on the little green lizards on the wall over yonder! How beautiful the bougainvillea looks, as it clambers with its great purple masses over that big bare trunk there! We have a splendid bougainvillea in the greenhouse at our place in Lincolnshire; but oh, what a difference, when one sees it clamoring in its native wildness like that, from the poor little stunted things we trail and crucify on our artificial supports over yonder in England! I almost feel inclined to take up my abode here altogether, it all looks so green and sunny and bright and beautiful.’

‘And yet,’ Nora said, ‘Mr. Hawthorn told me your father’s place in Lincolnshire is so very lovely. He thinks it’s the finest country seat he’s ever seen anywhere in England.’

‘Yes, it *is* pretty, certainly,’ Harry Noel admitted with a depreciating wave of his delicate right hand—‘very pretty, and very well kept up, one must allow, as places go nowadays. I took Hawthorn down there one summer vac., when we two were at Cambridge together, and he was quite delighted with it; and really, it *is* a very nice place, too, though it *is* in Lincolnshire. The house is old, you know, really old—not Elizabethan, but early Tudor, Henry the Seventh, or something thereabouts: all battlements and corner turrets, and roses and portcullises on all the shields, and a fine old portico, added by Inigo Jones, I believe, and out of keeping, of course,

with the rest of the front, but still, very fine and dignified in its own way, for all that, in spite of what the architects (awful prigs) say to the contrary. And then there's a splendid avenue of Spanish chestnuts, considered to be the oldest in all England, you know (though, to be sure, they've got the oldest Spanish chestnuts in the whole country at every house in all Lincolnshire that I've ever been to). And the lawn's pretty, very pretty; a fine stretch of sward, with good parterres of these ugly, modern, jam-tart flowers, leading down to about the best sheet of water in the whole county, with lots of swans on it.—Yes,' he added reflectively, contrasting the picture in his own mind with the one then actually before him, 'the Hall's not a bad sort of place in its own way—far from it.'

'And Mr. Hawthorn told me,' Nora put

in, 'that you'd got such splendid conservatories and gardens too.'

'Well, we have ; there's no denying it. They're certainly good in their way, too, very good conservatories. You see, my dear mother's very fond of flowers : it's a perfect passion with her ; brought it over from Barbadoes, I fancy. She was one of the very first people who went in for growing orchids on the large scale in England. Her orchid-houses are really awfully beautiful. We never have anything but orchids on the table for dinner—in the way of flowers, I mean—we don't dine off a lily, of course, as they say the æsthetes do. And my mother's never so proud as when anybody praises and admires her masdevallias or her thingumbobianas—I'm sorry to say I don't myself know the names of half of them. She's a

dear, sweet, old lady, my mother, Miss Dupuy ; I'm sure you couldn't fail to like my dear mother.'

'She's a Barbadian too, you told us,' Nora said reflectively. 'How curious that she too should be a West Indian !'

Harry half sighed. He misunderstood entirely the train of thought that was passing that moment through Nora's mind. He believed she saw in it a certain *rapprochement* between them two, a natural fitness of things to bring them together. 'Yes,' he said, with more tenderness in his tone than was often his wont, 'my mother's a Barbadian, Miss Dupuy ; such a grand, noble-looking, commanding woman—not old yet ; she never *will* be old, in fact ; she's too handsome for that ; but so graceful and beautiful, and wonderfully winning as well, in all her pretty,

dainty, old coffee-coloured laces' And he pulled from his pocket a little miniature, which he always wore next to his heart. He wore another one beside it, too, but that one he didn't show her just then ; it was her own face, done on ivory by a well-known artist, from a photograph which he had begged or borrowed from Marian Hawthorn's album twelve months before in London.

'She's a beautiful old lady, certainly,' Nora answered, gazing in some surprise at Lady Noel's clear-cut and haughty, high-born-looking features. She couldn't for the moment exactly remember where she had seen some others so very like them ; and then, as Harry's evil genius would unluckily have it, she suddenly recollected with a start of recognition ; she had seen them just the evening before on the lawn in front of her ;

they answered precisely, in a lighter tint, to the features and expression of Isaac Pourtalès !

‘How proud she must be to be the mistress of such a place as Noel Hall !’ she said musingly, after a short pause, pursuing in her own mind to herself her own private line of reflection. It seemed to her as if the heiress of the Barbadian brown people must needs find herself immensely lifted up in the world by becoming the lady of such a splendid mansion as Harry had just half unconsciously described to her.

But Harry himself, to whom, of course, Lady Noel had been Lady Noel, and nothing else, as long as ever he could remember her, again misunderstood entirely the course of Nora’s thoughts, and took her naïve expression of surprise as a happy omen for his

own suit. 'She thinks,' he thought to himself quietly, 'that it must be not such a very bad position after all to be mistress of the finest estate in Lincolnshire! But I don't want her to marry me for that. O no, not for that! that would be miserable! I want her to marry me for my very self, or else for nothing.' So he merely added aloud, in an unconcerned tone: 'Yes; she's very fond of the place and of the gardens; and as she's a West Indian by birth, I'm sure you'd like her very much, Miss Dupuy, if you were ever to meet her.'

Nora coloured. 'I should like to see some of these fine English places very much,' she said, half timidly, trying with awkward abruptness to break the current of the conversation. 'I never had the chance when I was last in England. My aunt, you

know, knew only very quiet people in London, and we never visited at any of the great country-houses.'

Harry determined that instant to throw his last die at once on this evident chance that opened up so temptingly before him, and said with fervour, bending forward towards her: 'I hope, Miss Dupuy, when you are next in England, you'll have the opportunity of seeing many, and some day of becoming the mistress of the finest in Lincolnshire. I told you at Southampton, you know, that I would follow you to Trinidad, and I've kept my promise.—Oh, Miss Dupuy, I hope you don't mean to say *no* to me this time again! We have each had twelve months more to make up our minds in. During all those twelve months, I have only learned every day, whether in England or in Trinidad, to

love you better. I have felt compelled to come out here and ask you to accept me. And you—haven't you found your heart growing any softer meanwhile towards me? Will you unsay now the refusal you gave me a year ago over in England ?'

He spoke in a soft persuasive voice, which thrilled through Nora's very inmost being; and as she looked at him, so handsome, so fluent, so well-born, so noble-looking, she could hardly refrain from whispering low a timid 'Yes,' on the impulse of the moment. But something that was to her almost as the prick of conscience arose at once irresistibly within her, and she motioned away quickly, with a little gesture of positive horror, the hand with which Harry strove half forcibly to take her own. The image of scowling Isaac Pourtalès as he emerged, all unexpectedly,

from the shadow the night before, rose up now in strange vividness before her eyes and blinded her vision; next moment, for the first time in her life, she perceived hurriedly that Isaac not only resembled Lady Noel, but quite as closely resembled in face and feature Harry also. That unhappy resemblance was absolutely fatal to poor Harry's doubtful chance of final acceptance. Nora shrank back, half frightened and wholly disenchanted, as far as she could go, in her own chair, and answered in a suddenly altered voice: 'Oh, Mr. Noel, I didn't know you were going to begin that subject again: I thought we met on neutral ground, merely as friends now. I—I gave you my answer definitely long ago at Southampton. There has been nothing—nothing of any sort—to make me alter it since I spoke to you then.

I like you—I like you very much indeed; and I'm so grateful to you for standing up as you have stood up for Mr. Hawthorn and for poor dear Marian—but I can never, never, never—never marry you !'

Harry drew back hastily with sudden surprise and great astonishment. He had felt almost sure she was going this time really to accept him; everything she said had sounded so exactly as if she meant at last to take him. The disappointment took away his power of fluent speech. He could only ask, in a suddenly checked undertone; 'Why, Miss Dupuy? You will at least tell me, before you dismiss me for ever, why your answer is so absolutely final.'

Nora took up the little patch of crewel-work she had momentarily dropped, and pretended, with rigid, trembling fingers, to

be stitching away at it most industriously. 'I cannot tell you,' she answered very slowly, after a moment's long hesitation: 'don't ask me. I can never tell you.'

Harry rose and gazed at her anxiously. 'You cannot mean to say,' he whispered, bending down towards her till their two faces almost touched one another, 'that you are going willingly to marry your cousin, for whom your father intends you? Miss Dupuy, that would be most unworthy of you! You do not love him! You cannot love him!'

'I hate him!' Nora answered with sudden vehemence; and at the words, the blood rushed hot again into Harry's cheek, and he whispered once more: 'Then, why do you say—why do you say, Nora, you will never marry me?'

At the sound of her name, so uttered by

Harry Noel's lips, Nora rose and stood confronting him with crimson face and trembling fingers. 'Because, Mr. Noel,' she answered slowly and with emphasis, 'an impassable barrier stands for ever fixed and immovable between us!'

'Can she mean,' Harry thought to himself hastily, 'that she considers my position in life too far above her own to allow of her marrying me?—O no; impossible, impossible! A lady's a lady wherever she may be; and nobody could ever be more of a lady, in every action and every movement, than Nora, my Nora. She *shall* be my Nora. I *must* win her over. But I can't say it to her; I can't answer her little doubt as to her perfect equality with me; it would be far too great presumption even to suggest it.'

Well it was, indeed, for Harry Noel that

he didn't hint aloud in the mildest form this unlucky thought, that flashed for one indivisible second of time across the mirror of his inner consciousness ; if he had, Heaven only knows whether Nora would have darted away angrily like a wounded tigress from the polluted veranda, or would have stood there petrified and chained to the spot, like a Gorgon-struck Greek figure in pure white marble, at the bare idea that any creature upon God's earth should even for a passing moment appear to consider himself superior in position to a single daughter of the fighting Dupuys of Orange Grove, Trinidad !

‘Then you dismiss me for ever?’ Harry asked quivering.

Nora cast her eyes irresolutely down upon the ground and faltered for a second ; then,

with a sudden burst of firmness, she answered tremulously : ‘ Yes, for ever.’

At the word, Harry bounded away like a wounded man from her side, and rushed wildly with tempestuous heart into his own bedroom. As for Nora, she walked quietly back, white, but erect, to her little boudoir, and when she reached it, astonished Aunt Clemmy by flinging herself with passionate force down at full length upon the big old sofa, and bursting at once into uncontrollable floods of silent, hot, and burning tears.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THAT same afternoon, Rosina Fleming met Isaac Pourtalès, hanging about idly below the shrubbery, and waiting to talk with her, by appointment, about some important business she had to discuss with him of urgent necessity.

‘Isaac, me fren’, Rosina began in her dawdling tone, as soon as they had interchanged the first endearments of negro lovers, ‘I send for you to-day to ax you what all dis talk mean about de naygur risin’? I want to know when dem gwine to rise, an’ what de debbil dem gwine to do when dem done gone risen?’

Isaac smiled a sardonic smile of superior intelligence. 'Missy Rosie, sweetheart,' he answered evasively, 'le-ady doan't understand dem ting same as men does. Dis is political business, I tell you. Le-ady doan't nebber hab no call to go an' mix himself up along wit politic an' political business.'

'But I tellin' you, Isaac, what I want for to know is about de missy. Mistah Delgado, him tell me de odder ebenin', when de great an' terrible day ob de Lard come, de missy an' all gwine to be murdered. So I come for to ax you, me fren', what for dem want to go an' kill de poor little missy? Him doan't nebber do no harm to nobody. Him is good little le-ady, kind little le-ady. Why for you doan't can keep him alive an' let him go witout hurtin' him, Isaac?'

Pourtales smiled again, this time a more

diabolical and sinister smile, as though he were concealing something from Rosina. 'We doan't gwine to kill her,' he answered hastily, with that horrid light illumining once more his cold grey eyes. 'We gwine to keep de women alive, accordin' to de word ob de Lard dat he spake by de mout' ob de holy prophet. "Have dey not divided de prey? To ebbery man a damsel or two: to Sisera, a prey ob divers colours." What dat mean, de divers colours, Rosie? Dat no mean you an' de missy? Ha, ha, ha! you an' de missy!'

Rosina started back a little surprised at this naïve personal effort of exegetical research. 'How dat, Isaac?' she screamed out angrily. 'You lub de missy! You doan't satisfied wit your fren' Rosie?'

Isaac laughed again. 'Ho, ho!' he said; 'dat make you jealous, Missy Rosie? Ha,

ha, dat good now! Pretty little gal for true, de missy! Him white troat so soft an' smooove! Him red cheek so plump an' even! What you want now we do wit him, Missy Rosie? You tink me gwine to kill him when him so pretty?'

Rosina gazed at him open-eyed in blank astonishment. 'You doan't must kill him,' she answered stoutly. 'I lub de missy well meself for true, Isaac. If you kill de missy, I doan't nebber gwine to speak wit you any more. I gwine to tell de missy all about dis ting ob Delgado's, I tink, to-morrow.'

Isaac stared her hard in the face. 'You doan't dare, Rosie,' he said doggedly.

The girl trembled and shuddered slightly before his steady gaze. A negro, like an animal, can never bear to be stared at straight in the eyes. After a moment's rest-

less shrinking, she withdrew her glance uneasily from his, but still muttered to herself slowly : ‘I tell de missy—I tell de missy!’

‘If you tell de missy,’ Pourtalès answered with rough emphasis, seizing her by the shoulder with his savage grasp, ‘you know what happen to you? Delgado send debbil an’ duppy to walk about you an’ creep ober you in de dead ob night ebbery ebenin’, an’ chatter obeah to you, an’ tear de heart out ob you when you lyin’ sleepin’. If you tell de missy, you know what happen to me? Dem will take me down to de big court-house in Wes’moreland village, sit on me so try me for rebel, cut me up into little pieces, burn me dead, an’ trow de ashes for rubbish into de harbour. Den I come, when I is duppy, sit at de head ob your pillow ebbery ebenin’, grin at you, jabber at you, ho, ho, ho; ha,

ha, ha : show you de holes where dem cut my body up, show you de blood where de wounds is bleedin', make you scream an' cry an' wish youself dead, till you dribben to trow youself down de well wit horror, or poison youself for fright wit berry ob machineel bush !'

This short recital of penalties to come was simple and ludicrous enough in its own matter, but duly enforced by Isaac's horrid shrugs and hideous grimaces, as well as by the iron clutch with which he dug his firm-gripped fingers, nails and all, deep into her flesh, to emphasise his prediction, it affected the superstitious negro girl a thousand times more than the most deliberately awful civilised imprecation could possibly have done. 'You doan't would do dat, Isaac,' she cried all breathless, struggling in vain to free her arm from the fierce grip that held it

resistlessly—‘you doan’t would do dat, me fren’. You doan’t would come when you is duppy to haunt me an’ to frighten me!’

‘I would!’ Isaac answered firmly, with close-pressed lips, inhuman mulatto-fashion (for when there is a devil in the mulatto nature, it is a devil more utterly diabolical than any known to either white or black men: it combines the dispassionate intellectual power of the one with the low cunning and savage moral code of the other). ‘I would hound you to deat’, Rosie, an’ kill you witout pity. For if you tell de missy about dis, dem will cut your fren’ all up into little pieces, I tellin’ you, le-ady.’

‘Doan’t call me le-ady,’ Rosina said, melting at the formal address and seizing his hand penitently: ‘call me Rosie, call me Rosie. O Isaac, I doan’t will tell de missy, if

you doan't like ; but you promise me for true you nebber gwine to take him an' kill him.'

Isaac smiled again the sinister smile. 'I promise,' he said, with a curious emphasis ; 'I doan't gwine to *kill* him, Rosie ! When I take him, I no will *kill* him !'

Rosina hesitated a moment, then she asked shortly : 'What day you tink Delgado gwine at last to hab him risin' ?'

The mulatto laughed a scornful little laugh of supreme mockery. 'Delgado's risin' !' he cried, with a sneer—'Delgado's risin' ! You tink, den, Rosie, dis is Delgado's risin' ! You tink we gwine to risk our own life, black men an' brown men, so make Delgado de king ob Trinidad ! Ha, ha, ha ! dat is too good, now. No, no, me fren' ; dis doan't at all Delgado's risin' ! You tink we

gwine to hand ober de whole island to a pack ob dam common contemptful naygur fellow ! Ha, ha, ha ! Le-ady doan't nebber understand politic an' political business. *He*, Rosie, I tell you de trut' ; when we kill de buckra clean out ob de island, I gwine meself to be de chief man in all Trinidad !' And as he spoke, he drew himself up proudly to his full height, and put one hand behind his back in his most distinguished and magnificent attitude.

Rosina looked up at him with profound admiration. ' You is clebber gentleman for certain, Isaac,' she cried in unfeigned reverence for his mental superiority. ' You let Delgado make de naygur rise ; den, when dem done gone risen, you gwine to eat de chestnut yourself him pull out ob de fire witout burn your fingers !'

Isaac nodded sagaciously. ‘Le-ady begin to understand politic a little,’ he said condescendingly. ‘Dat what for dem begin to ax dis time for de female suffrage.’

Grotesque, all of it, if you forget that each of these childish creatures is the possessor of a sharp cutlass and a pair of stout sinewy arms, as hard as iron, wherewith to wield it: terrible and horrible beyond belief if only you remember that one awful element of possible tragedy inclosed within it. The recklessness, the folly, the infantile misapprehension of mischievous children, incongruously combined with the strength, the passions, the firm purpose of fierce and powerful full-grown men. An infant Hercules, with superadded malevolence—the muscles of a gorilla with the brain of a cruel schoolboy—that is what

the negro is in his worst and ugliest moments of vindictive anger.

‘You doan’t tell me yet,’ Rosina said again, pouting, after a short pause, ‘what day you gwine to begin your war ob de delibberance.’

Isaac pondered. If he told her the whole truth, she would probably reveal it. On the other hand, if he didn’t mention Wednesday at all, she would probably hear some vague buzzing rumour about some Wednesday unfixed, from the other conspirators. So he temporised and conciliated. ‘Well, Rosie,’ he said in a hesitating voice, ‘if I tell you de trut’, you will not betray me?’—Rosie nodded. ‘Den de great an’ terrible day ob de Lard is comin’ true on Wednesday week, Rosie!’

‘Wednesday week,’ Rosina echoed. ‘Den,

on Wednesday week, I gwine to make de missy go across to Mistah Hawthorn's !'

Isaac smiled. His precautions, then, had clearly not been unneeded. You can't trust le-ady with high political secrets. He smiled again, and muttered complacently: 'Quite right, quite right, Rosie.'

'When can I see you again, me darlin'?' Rosie inquired anxiously.

Isaac bethought him in haste of a capital scheme for removing Rosina to-morrow evening from the scene of operations. 'You can get away to-morrow?' he asked with a cunning leer. 'About eight o'clock at me house, Rosie?'

Rosie reflected a moment, and then nodded. 'Aunt Clemmy will do the missy hair,' she answered slowly. 'I come down at de time, Isaac.'

Isaac laughed again. 'Perhaps,' he said, 'I doan't can get away so early, me fren', from de political meetin'—dar is political meetin' to-morrow ebenin' down at Delgado's; but anyhow, you wait till ten o'clock. Sooner or later, I is sure to come dar.

Rosina gave him her hand reluctantly, and glided away back to the house in a stealthy fashion. As soon as she was gone, Pourtalès flung his head back in a wild paroxysm of savage laughter. 'Ho, ho, ho!' he cried. 'De missy, de missy! Ha, ha, I get Rosina out ob de road anyhow. Him doan't gwine to tell nuffin now, an' him clean off de scent ob de fun altogedder to-morrow ebenin'! Pretty little gal, dat white missy! Him sweet little troat, so soft an' shinin'!'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AT the dinner that evening, Macfarlane, the Scotch doctor, took in Nora ; while Harry Noel had handed over to his care a dowager-planteress from a neighbouring estate ; so Harry had no need to talk any further to his pretty little hostess during that memorable Tuesday. On Wednesday morning he had made up his mind he would find some excuse to get away from this awkward position in Mr. Dupuy's household ; for it was clearly impossible for him to remain there any longer, after he had again asked and been rejected by Nora ; but of course he couldn't go so

suddenly before the dinner to be given in his honour ; and he waited on, impatiently and sullenly

Tom Dupuy was there too; and even Mr. Theodore Dupuy himself, who knew the whole secret of Harry's black blood, and therefore regarded him now as almost beyond the pale of human sympathy, couldn't help noticing to himself that his nephew Tom really seemed quite unnecessarily anxious to drag this unfortunate young man Noel into some sort of open rupture. 'Very ill advised of Tom,' Mr. Dupuy thought to himself; 'and very bad manners too, for a Dupuy of Trinidad. He ought to know well enough that whatever the young man's undesirable antecedents may happen to be, as long as he's here in the position of a guest, he ought at least to be treated with common decency and

common politeness. To-morrow, we shall manage to hunt up some excuse, or give him some effectual hint, which will have the result of clearing him bodily off the premises. Till then, Tom ought to endeavour to treat him, as far as possible, in every way like a perfect equal.'

Even during the time while the ladies still remained in the dining-room, Tom Dupuy couldn't avoid making several severe hits, as he considered them, at Harry Noel from the opposite side of the hospitable table. Harry had happened once to venture on some fairly sympathetic commonplace remark to his dowager-planteress about the planters having been quite ruined by emancipation, when Tom Dupuy fell upon him bodily, and called out with an unconcealed sneer: 'Ruined by emancipation!—ruined by emancipation!

That just shows how much you know about the matter, to talk of the planters being ruined by emancipation! If you knew anything at all of what you're talking about, you'd know that it wasn't emancipation in the least that ruined us, but your plaguy parliament doing away with the differential duties.'

Harry bit his lip, and glanced across the table at the young planter with a quiet smile of superiority; but the only word he permitted himself to utter was the one harmless and neutral word 'Indeed!'

'O yes, you may say "Indeed" if you like,' Tom Dupuy retorted warmly. 'That's just the way of all you conceited English people. You think you know such a precious lot about the whole subject, and you really and truly know in the end just less than absolutely nothing.'

‘Pardon me,’ Harry answered carelessly, with his wine-glass poised for a moment half lifted in his hand. ‘I admit most unreservedly that you know a great deal more than I do about the differential duties, whatever they may be, for I never so much as heard their very name in all my life until the present moment.’

Tom Dupuy smiled a satisfied smile of complete triumph. ‘I thought as much,’ he said exultantly; ‘I knew you hadn’t. That’s just the way of all English people. They know nothing at all about the most important and essential matters, and yet they venture to talk about them for all the world as if they knew as much as we do about the whole subject.’

‘Really,’ Harry answered with a good-humoured smile, ‘I fancied a man might be

fairly well informed about things in general, and yet never have heard in his pristine innocence of the differential duties. I haven't the very faintest idea myself, to tell you the truth, of what they are. Perhaps you will be good enough to lighten my darkness.'

'What they are!' Tom Dupuy ejaculated in pious horror. 'They aren't anything. They're done away with. They've ceased to exist long ago. You and the other plaguy English people took them off, and ruined the colonies; and now you don't as much as know what you've done, or whether they're existing still or done away with!'

'Tom, my boy,' Mr. Theodore Dupuy interposed blandly, 'you really mustn't hold Mr. Noel personally responsible for all the undoubted shortcomings of the English nation! You must remember that his father

is, like ourselves, a West Indian proprietor, and that the iniquitous proceedings with reference to the differential duties—which nobody can for a moment pretend to justify—injured him every bit as much as they injured ourselves.’

‘But what *are* the differential duties?’ Harry whispered to his next neighbour but one, the Scotch doctor. ‘I never heard of them in my life, I assure you, till this very minute.’

‘Well, ye ken,’ Dr. Macfarlane responded slowly, ‘there was a time when shoogar from the British colonies was admeetted into Britain at a less duty than shoogar from Cuba or other foreign possessions; and at last, the British consumer tuke the tax off the foreign shoogar, and cheapened them all alike in the British market. Vera guid, of course, for

the British consumer, but clean ruination and nothing else for the Treenidad planter.'

For the moment the conversation changed, but not the smouldering war between the two belligerents. Whatever subject Harry Noel happened to start during that unlucky dinner, Tom Dupuy, watching him closely, pounced down upon him at once like an owl on the hover, and tore him to pieces with prompt activity. Harry bore it all as good-naturedly as he could, though his temper was by no means naturally a forbearing one ; but he didn't wish to come to an open rupture with Tom Dupuy at his uncle's table, especially after that morning's occurrences.

As soon as the ladies had left the room, however, Tom Dupuy drew up his chair so as exactly to face Harry, and began to pour out for himself in quick succession glass after

glass of his uncle's very fiery sherry, which he tossed off with noisy hilarity. The more he drank, the louder his voice became, and the hotter his pursuit of Harry Noel. At last, when Mr. Theodore Dupuy, now really alarmed as to what his nephew was going to say next, ordered in the coffee prematurely, to prevent an open outbreak by rejoining the ladies, Tom walked deliberately over to the sideboard and took out a large square decanter, from which he poured a good-sized liqueur-glassful of some pale liquid for himself and another for Harry.

‘There!’ he cried boisterously. ‘Just you try that, Noel, will you? There’s liquor for you! That’s the real old Pimento Valley rum, the best in the island, double distilled, and thirty years in bottle. You don’t taste any *hogo* about that, Mr. Englishman, eh, do you?’

‘ Any what ? ’ Harry inquired politely, lifting up the glass and sipping a little of the contents out of pure courtesy, for neat rum is not in itself a very enticing beverage to any other than West Indian palates.

‘ Any *hogo*, ’ Tom Dupuy repeated loudly and insolently—‘ *hogo, hogo*. I suppose, now, you mean to say you don’t even know what *hogo* is, do you ?—Never heard of *hogo* ? Precious affectation ! Don’t understand plain language ! Yah, rubbish. ’

‘ Why, no certainly, ’ Harry assented as calmly as he was able ; ‘ I never before did hear of *hogo*, I assure you. I haven’t the slightest idea what it is, or whether I ought rather to admire or to deplore its supposed absence in this very excellent old rum of yours. ’

‘ *Hogo*’s French, ’ Tom Dupuy asserted

doggedly, ‘*Hogo’s* French, and I should have thought you ought to have known it. Everybody in Trinidad knows what *hogo* is. It’s French, I tell you. Didn’t you ever learn any French at the school you went to, Noel?’

‘Excuse me,’ Harry said, flushing up a little, for Tom Dupuy had asked the question very offensively. ‘It is *not* French. I know enough of French at least to say that such a word as *hogo*, whatever it may mean, couldn’t possibly be French for anything.’

‘As my nephew pronounces it,’ Mr. Dupuy put in diplomatically, ‘you may perhaps have some difficulty in recognising its meaning; but it’s our common West Indian corruption, Mr. Noel, of *haut goût*—*haut goût*, you understand me—precisely so; *haut goût*, or *hogo*, being the strong and somewhat

offensive molasses-like flavour of new rum, before it has been mellowed, as this of ours has been, by being kept for years in the wood and in bottle.'

'Oh, ah, that's all very well ! I suppose *you're* going to turn against me now, Uncle Theodore,' Tom Dupuy exclaimed angrily—he was reaching the quarrelsome stage of incipient drunkenness. 'I suppose *you* must go and make fun of me, too, for my French pronunciation as well as this fine-spoken Mr. Noel here. But I don't care a pin about it, or about either of you, either. Who's Mr. Noel, I should like to know, that he should come here, with his fine new-fangled English ways, setting himself up to be better than we are, and teaching us to improve our French pronunciation?—O yes, it's all very fine; but what does he want to go stopping in our

houses for, with our own ladies, and all that, and then going and visiting with coloured rubbish that I wouldn't touch with a pair of tongs—the woolly-headed niggers! — that's what I want to know, Uncle Theodore? '

Mr. Dupuy and Harry rose together. 'Tom, Tom!' Mr. Dupuy cried warningly, 'you are quite forgetting yourself. Remember that this gentleman is my guest, and is here to-day by my invitation. How dare you say such things as that to my own guest, sir, at my own table? You insult me, sir, you insult me!'

'I think,' Harry interrupted, white with anger, 'I had better withdraw at once, Mr. Dupuy, before things go any further, from a room where I am evidently, quite without any intention on my own part, a cause of turmoil and disagreement.'

He moved hastily towards the open window which gave upon the lawn, where the ladies were strolling, after the fashion of the country, in the silvery moonlight, among the tropical shrubbery. But Tom Dupuy jumped up before him and stood in his way, now drunk with wine and rum and insolence and temper, and blocked his road to the open window.

‘No, no!’ he cried, ‘you shan’t go yet!—I’ll tell you all the reason why, gentlemen. He shall hear the truth. I’ll take the vanity and nonsense out of him! He’s a brown man himself, nothing but a brown man!—Do you know, you fine fellow you, that you’re only, after all, a confounded woolly-headed brown mulatto? You are, sir! you are, I tell you! Look at your hands, you damned nigger, look at your hands, I say, if ever you doubt it.’

Harry Noel's proud lip curled contemptuously as he pushed the half-tipsy planter aside with his elbow, and began to stride angrily away towards the moonlit shrubbery. 'I dare say I am,' he answered coolly, for he was always truthful, and it flashed across his mind in the space of a second that Tom Dupuy was very possibly right enough. 'But if I am, my good fellow, I will no longer inflict my company, I tell you, upon persons who, I see, are evidently so little desirous of sharing it any further.'

'Yes, yes,' Tom Dupuy exclaimed madly, planting himself once more like a fool in front of the angry and retreating Englishman, 'he's a brown man, a mulatto, a coloured fellow, gentlemen, own cousin of that infernal nigger scamp, Isaac Pourtalès, whose woolly head I'd like to knock this minute against his own

woolly head, the insolent upstart! Why, gentlemen, do you know who his mother was? Do you know who this fine Lady Noel was that he wants to come over us with? She was nothing better, I swear to you solemnly, than a common brown wench over in Barbadoes!’

Harry Noel’s face grew livid purple with that foul insult, as he leapt like a wild beast at the roaring West Indian, and with one fierce blow in the centre of his chest, sent him reeling backward upon the floor at his feet like a senseless lump of dead matter. ‘Hound and cur! how dare you?’ he hissed out hoarsely, placing the tip of his foot contemptuously on the fallen planter’s crumpled shirt-front. ‘How dare you?—how dare you? Say what you will of me, myself, you miserable black-guard—but my mother! my mother’ And

then suddenly recollecting himself, with a profound bow to the astonished company, he hurried out, hatless and hot, on to the darkling shrubbery, casting the dust of Orange Grove off his feet half instinctively behind him as he went.

Next moment a soft voice sounded low beside him, to his intense astonishment. As he strode alone across the dark lawn, Nora Dupuy, who had seen the whole incident from the neighbouring shrubbery, glided out to his side from the shadow of the star-apple tree and whispered a few words earnestly in his ear. Harry Noel, still white with passion and trembling in every muscle like a hunted animal, could not but stop and listen to them eagerly even in that supreme moment of righteous indignation. ‘Thank you, Mr. Noel,’ she said simply—‘thank you, thank you!’

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE gentlemen in the dining-room stood looking at one another in blank dismay for a few seconds, and then Dr. Macfarlane broke the breathless silence by saying out loud, with his broad Scotch bluntness: ‘Ye’re a fool, Tom Dupuy—a vera fine fool, ye are, of the first watter; and I’m not sorry the young Englishman knocked ye doon and gave ye a lesson, for speaking ill against his own mother.’

‘Where has he gone?’ Dick Castello, the Governor’s aide-de-camp, asked quickly, as Tom picked himself up with a sheepish,

awkward, drunken look. ‘He can’t sleep here to-night now, you know, and he’ll have to sleep somewhere or other, Macfarlane, won’t he?’

‘Run after him,’ the doctor said, ‘and tak’ him to your own house, I tell ye. Not one of these precious Treenidad folk’ll stir hand or fute to befriend him anyhow, now they’ve once been told he’s a puir brown body.’

Dick Castello took up his hat and ran as fast as he could go after Harry Noel. He caught him up, breathless, half-way down to the gate of the estate; for Harry, though he had gone off hurriedly without hat or coat, was walking alone down the main road coolly enough now, trying to look and feel within himself as though nothing at all unusual in any way had happened.

‘Where are you going to, Noel?’ Dick Castello asked, in a friendly voice.—‘By Jove! I’m jolly glad you knocked that fellow down, and tried to teach him a little manners, though he *is* old Dupuy’s nephew. But of course you can’t stop there to-night. What do you mean now to do with yourself?’

‘I shall go to Hawthorn’s,’ Harry answered quietly.

‘Better not go there,’ Dick Castello urged, taking him gently by the shoulder. ‘If you do, you know, it’ll look as if you wanted to give a handle to Tom Dupuy and break openly with the whole lot of them. Tom Dupuy insulted you abominably, and you couldn’t have done anything else but knock him down, of course, my dear fellow; and he needed it jolly well, too, we all know perfectly. But don’t let it seem as if you

were going to quarrel with the whole lot of us. Come home to my house now at Savannah Garden. I'll walk straight over there with you and have a room got ready for you at once; and then I'll go back to Orange Grove for Mrs. Castello, and bring across as much of your luggage as I can in my carriage, at least as much as you'll need for the present.'

'Very well, Captain Castello,' Harry Noel answered submissively. 'It's very kind of you to take me in. I'll go with you; you know best about it. But hang it all, you know, upon my word I expect the fellow may have been telling the truth after all, and I dare say I really am what these fools of Trinidad people call a brown man. Did ever you hear such infernal nonsense? Calling me a brown man! As if it ever mattered two-

pence to any sensible person whether a man was black, brown, white, or yellow, as long as he's not such a confounded cad and boor as that roaring tipsy lout of a young Dupuy fellow !'

So Harry Noel went that Tuesday night to Captain Castello's at Savannah Garden, and slept, or rather lay awake, there till Wednesday morning—the morning of the day set aside by Louis Delgado and Isaac Pourtalès for their great rising and general massacre.

As for Nora, she went up to her own boudoir as soon as the guests had gone—they didn't stay long after this awkward occurrence—and threw herself down once more on the big sofa, and cried as if her heart would burst for very anguish and humiliation.

He had knocked down Tom Dupuy.

That was a good thing as far as it went ! For that at least, if for nothing else, Nora was duly grateful to him. But had she gone too far in thanking him ? Would he accept it as a proof that she meant him to reopen the closed question between them ? Nora hoped not, for that—that at any rate was now finally settled. She could never, never, never marry a brown man ! And yet, how much nicer and bolder he was than all the other men she saw around her ! Nora liked him even for his faults. That proud, frank, passionate Noel temperament of his, which many girls would have regarded with some fear and no little misgiving, exactly suited her West Indian prejudices and her West Indian ideal. His faults were the faults of a proud aristocracy ; and it was entirely as a member of a proud aristocracy herself that

Nora Dupuy lived and moved and had her being. A man like Edward Hawthorn she could like and respect ; but a man like Harry Noel she could admire and love—if he were only not a brown man ! What a terrible cross-arrangement of fate that the one man who seemed otherwise exactly to suit her girlish ideal, should happen to belong remotely to the one race between which and her own there existed in her mind for ever and ever an absolutely fixed and irremovable barrier !

So Nora, too, lay awake all night ; and all night long she thought but of one thing and one person—the solitary man she could never, never, never, conceivably marry.

And Harry, for his part, thinking to himself, on his tumbled pillow, at Savannah Garden, said to his own heart over and over

and over again : ‘ I shall love her for ever ; I can never while I live leave off loving her. But after what occurred yesterday and last night, I mustn’t dream for worlds of asking her a third time. I know now what it was she meant when she spoke about the barrier between us. Poor girl ! how very wild of her ! How strange that she should think in her own soul a Dupuy of Trinidad superior in position to one of the ancient Lincolnshire Noels ! ’

For pride always sees everything from its own point of view alone, and never for a moment succeeds in envisaging to itself the pride of others as being equally reasonable and natural with its own.

CHAPTER XXXV.

TWILIGHT, the beautiful serene tropical twilight, was just gathering on Wednesday evening, when the negroes of all the surrounding country, fresh from their daily work in the cane-pieces, with cutlasses and sticks and cudgels in their hands, began to assemble silently around Louis Delgado's hut, in the bend of the mountains beside the great clump of feathery cabbage-palms. A terrible motley crowd they looked, bareheaded and bare of foot, many of them with their powerful black arms wholly naked, and thrust loosely through the wide sleeve-holes of the coarse sack-like

shirt which, with a pair of ragged trousers, formed their sole bodily covering. Most of the malcontents were men, young and old, sturdy and feeble ; but among them there were not a few fierce-looking girls and women, plantation hands of the wildest and most unkempt sort, carelessly dressed in short ragged filthy kirtles, that reached only to the knee, and with their woolly hair tangled and matted with dust and dirt, instead of being covered with the comely and becoming bandana turban of the more civilised and decent household negresses. These women carried cutlasses too, the ordinary agricultural implement of all sugar-growing tropical countries ; and one had but to glance at their stalwart black arms or their powerful naked legs and feet, as well as at their cruel laughing faces, to see in a moment that, if need were, they could

wield their blunt but heavy weapons fully as effectively and as ruthlessly in their own way as the resolute vengeful men themselves. So wholly unsexed were they, indeed, by brutal field-labour and brutal affections, that it was hard to look upon them closely for a minute and believe them to be really and truly women.

The conspirators assembled silently, it is true, so far as silence under such circumstances is ever possible to the noisy demonstrative negro nature; but in spite of the evident effort which every man made at self-restraint, there was a low under-current of whispered talk, accompanied by the usual running commentary of grimaces and gesticulations, which made a buzz or murmur hum ceaselessly through the whole crowd of five or six hundred armed semi-savages. Now and

again, the women especially, looking down with delightful anticipation at their newly-whetted cutlasses, would break out into hoarse ungovernable laughter, as they thought to themselves of the proud white throats they were going to cut that memorable evening, and the dying cries of the little white pickanies they were going to massacre in their flounced and embroidered lace bassinets.

‘It warm me heart, Mistah Delgado, sah,’ one white-haired, tottering, venerable old negro mumbled out slowly with a pleasant smile, ‘to see so many good neighbour all come togedder again for kill de buckra. It long since I see fine gadering like dis. I mind de time, sah, in slavery day, when I was young man, just begin for to make lub to de le-adies, how we rise all togedder under John

Trelawney down at Star-Apple Bottom, go hunt the white folk in the great insurrection. Ha, dem was times, sah—dem was times, I tellin' you de trut', me fren', in de great insurrection. We beat de goomba drum, we go up to Mistah Pourtalès—same what flog me mudder so unmerciful dat the buckra judges even fine him—an' we catch de massa himself, an' we beat him dead wit stick an' cutlass. Ha, ha, dem was times, sah. Den we catch de young le-adies, an' we hack dem all to pieces, an' we burn de bodies. Den we go on to odder house, take all de buckra we find, shoot some, roast some same we roast pig, an' burn some in deir own houses. Dem was times, sah—dem was times. I doan't s'pose naygur now will do like we do when I is young man. But dis is good meeting, fine meeting: we cry “Colour for colour.”

“ Buckra country for us,” an’ de Lard prosper us in de work we hab in hand ! Hallelujah ! ’

One of the women stood listening eagerly to this thrilling recital of early exploits, and asked him in a hushed voice of the intensest interest : ‘ An’ what de end ob it all, Mistah Corella ? What come ob it ? How you no get buckra house, den, for yourself lib in ? ’

The old man shook his head mournfully, as he answered with a meditative sigh : ‘ Ah, buckra too strong for us—too strong for us altogedder ! come upon us too many. Colonel Macgregor, him come wit plenty big army, gun an’ bay’net, an’ shoot us down, an’ charge us ridin’ ; so we all frightened, an’ run away hide in de’ bush right up in de mountains. Den dem bring Cuban bloodhound, hunt us out ; an’ dem hab court-martial, an’ dem sit on Trelawney, an’ dem

hang him, hang him dead, de buckra. An' dem hang plenty. We kill twenty—twenty-two—twenty-four buckra; an' buckra kill hundred an' eighty poor naygur, so make tings even. For one buckra, dem kill ten, fifteen, twenty naygur. But my master hide me till martial law blow ober, because I is strong, hearty young naygur, an' can work well for him down in cane-piece. Him say : “Doan't must kill valuable property!” An' I get off dat way. So dat de end ob John Trelawney him rebellion.'

If the poor soul could only have known it. he might have added with perfect truth that it was the end of every other negro rebellion too; the white oppressor is always too strong for them. But hope springs eternal in the black breast as in all others, and it was with a placid smile of utter oblivion that he added

next minute : ‘ But we doan’t gwine to be beaten dis time. We too strong ourselbes now for de soldier an’ de buckra. Delgado make tings all snug ; buy pistol, drill naygur, plan battle, till we sure ob de victory. De Lard wit us, an’ Delgado him serbant.’

At that moment, Louis Delgado himself stepped forward, erect and firm, with the unmistakable air of a born commander, and said a few words in a clear low earnest voice to the eager mob of armed rioters. ‘ Me fren’s,’ he said, ‘ you must obey orders. Go quiet, an’ make no noise till you get to de buckra houses. Doan’t turn aside for de rum or de trash-houses ; we get plenty rum for ourselves, I tellin’ you, when we done killed all de buckra. Doan’t set fire to de house anywhere ; only kill de male white folk ; we want house to lib in ourselves, when de war

ober. Doan't burn de factories; we want factory for make sugar ourselves when de buckra dribben altogedder clean out ob the country. Doan't light fire at all; if you light fire, de soldiers in Port-ob-Spain see de blaze directly, an' come up an' fight us hard, before we get togedder enough black men to make sure ob de glorious victory. Nebber mind de buckra le-ady; we can get dem when we want dem. Kill, kill, kill! dat is de watchword. Kill, kill, kill de buckra, an' de Lard delibber de rest into the hands ob his chosen people.' As he spoke, he raised his two black hands, palm upwards, in the attitude of earnest supplication, towards the darkening heaven, and flung his head fervently backward, with the whites of his big eyes rolling horribly, in his unspoken prayer to the God of battles.

The negroes around, caught with the contagious enthusiasm of Delgado's voice and mutely eloquent gesture, flung up their own dusky hands, cutlasses and all, with the self-same wild and expressive pantomime, and cried aloud, in a scarcely stifled undertone: 'De Lard delibber dem, de Lard delibber dem to Louis Delgado.'

The old African gazed around him complacently for a second at the goodly muster of armed followers, to the picked men among whom Isaac Pourtalès was already busily distributing the pistols and the cartridges. 'Are you ready, me fren's?' he asked again, after a short pause. And, like a deep murmur, the answer rang unanimously from that great tumultuous black mass; 'Praise de Lard, sah, we ready, we ready!'

'Den march!' Delgado cried, in the loud

tone of a commanding officer ; and suiting the action to the word, the whole mob turned after him silently, along the winding path that led down by tortuous twists from the clump of cabbage-palms to the big barn-like Orange Grove trash-houses.

With their naked feet and their cat-like tread, the negroes marched along far more silently than white men could ever have done, towards the faint lights that gleamed fitfully beyond the gully. If possible, Delgado would have preferred to lead them straight to Orange Grove House, for his resentment burnt fiercest of all against the Dupuy family, and he wished at least, whatever else happened, to make sure of massacring that one single obnoxious household. But it was absolutely necessary to turn first to the trash-houses and the factory, for rumours of some

impending trouble had already vaguely reached the local authorities. The two constables of the district stood there on guard, and the few faithful and trustworthy plantation hands were with them there, in spite of Mr. Dupuy's undisguised ridicule, half expecting an insurgent attack that very evening. It would never do to leave the enemy thus in the rear, ready either to attack them from behind, or to bear down the news and seek for aid at Port-of-Spain. Delgado's plan was therefore to carry each plantation entire as he went, without allowing time to the well-affected negroes to give the alarm to the whites in the next one. But he feared greatly the perils and temptations of the factory for his unruly army. 'Whatebber else you do, me fren's,' the old African muttered more than once, turning round

beseechingly to his ragged black followers, 'doan't drink de new rum, an' doan't set fire to de buckra trash-houses.'

At the foot of the little knoll under whose base the trash-houses lay, they came suddenly upon one of the faithful field-hands, Napoleon Floreal, whose fidelity Delgado had already in vain attempted with his rude persuasions. The negroes singled him out at once for their first vengeance. Before the man could raise so much as a sharp shout, Isaac Pourtalès had seized him from behind and gagged his mouth with a loose bandana. Two of the other men, quick as lightning, snatched his arms, and held them bent back in a very painful attitude behind his shoulders. 'If you is wit us,' Delgado said, in a hoarse whisper, 'lift your right foot, fellah.' Floreal kept both feet pressed doggedly down with negro

courage upon the ground. ‘Him is traitor, traitor!’ Pourtalès muttered, between his clenched teeth. ‘Him hab black skin, but white heart. Kill him, kill him!’

In a second, a dozen angry negroes had darted forward, with their savage cutlasses brandished aloft in the air, ready to hack their offending fellow-countryman into a thousand pieces. ‘Cut out him heart,’ cried one fiercely, ‘an’ let me eat it!’ But Delgado, his black hands held up with a warning air before them, thundered out in a tone of bitter indignation: ‘Doan’t kill him! —doan’t kill him! My children, kill in good order. Dar is plenty buckra for you to kill, witout want to kill your own brudder. Tie de han’kercher around him mout’, bind rope around him arm an’ leg, an’ trow him down de gully yonder among de cactus’jungle!’

Even as he spoke, one of the men produced a piece of stout rope from his pocket, brought for the very purpose of tying the 'prisoners,' and proceeded to wind it tightly around Floreal's body. They fastened it well round arms and legs; stuffed the bandana firmly down his throat, so as to check all his futile attempts at shouting, and rolled him over the slight bank of earth, down among the thick scrub of prickly cactus. Then, as the blood spurted out of the small wounds made by the sharp thorns, they gave a sudden low yell, and burst in a body upon the guardians of the trash-houses.

Before the two black policemen had time to know what was actually happening, they found themselves similarly gagged and bound, and tossed down beside Napoleon Floreal on the prickly cactus bed. In a minute, the

insurgents had surrounded the trash-houses, cut down and taken prisoners the few faithful negroes, and marched them along unwillingly in their own body, as hostages for the better behaviour of the Orange Grove house-servants.

‘Now, me fren’s,’ Delgado shouted, with fierce energy, ‘down wit de Dupuys! We gwine to humble de proud white man! We must hab blood! De Lard is wit us! He hat’ put down de mighty from deir seats, an’ hat’ exalted de lowly an’ meek!’

But as he spoke, one or two of the heaviest-looking among the rioters began to cast their longing eyes upon the unbroached hogsheads. ‘De rum, de rum!’ one of them cried hoarsely. ‘We want suffin for keep our courage up. Little drop o’ rum help naygur man well to humble de buckra.’

Delgado rushed forward and placed himself resolutely, pistol in hand, before the seductive hogsheads. ‘Whoebber drink a drop ob dat rum dis blessed ebenin’,’ he hissed out angrily, ‘before all de Dupuys is lyin’ cold in deir own houses, as sure as de gospel I shoot him dead here wit dis very pistol!’

But the foremost rioters only laughed louder than before, and one of them even wrenched the pistol suddenly from his leader’s grasp with an unexpected side movement. ‘Look hyar, Mistah Delgado,’ the man said quietly; ‘dis risin’ is all our risin’, an’ we has got to hab voice ourselbes in de par-tickler way we gwine to manage him. We doan’t gwine away witout de rum, an’ we gwine to break just one little pickanie hog-head.’ At the word, he raised his cutlass

above his head, and lunging forward with it like a sword, with all his force, stove in one of the thick cross-pieces at the top of the barrel, and let the precious liquor dribble out slowly from the chink in a small but continuous trickling stream. Next moment, a dozen black hands were held down to the silent rill like little cups, and a dozen dusky mouths were drinking down the hot new rum, neat and unalloyed, with fierce grimaces of the highest gusto. 'Ha, dat good!' ran round the chorus in thirsty approbation: 'dat warm de naygur's heart. Us gwine now to kill de buckra in true earnes'.

Delgado stood by, mad with rage and disappointment, as he saw his followers, one after another, scrambling for handful after handful of the fiery liquor, and watched some

of them, the women especially, reeling about foolishly almost at once from the poisonous fumes of the unrefined spirit. He felt in his heart that his chances were slipping rapidly from him, even before the insurrection was well begun, and that it would be impossible for a crowd of half-drunken negroes to preserve the order and discipline which alone would enable them to cope with the all-puissant and regularly drilled white men. But the more he stormed and swore and raved at them, the more did the greedy and uncontrolled negroes, now revelling in the unstinted supply, hold their hands to the undiminished stream, and drink it off by palmfuls with still deeper grunts and groans of internal satisfaction. ‘If it doan’t no hope ob conquer de island,’ the African muttered at last with a wild Guinea oath to Isaac

Pourtalès, 'at any rate we has time to kill de Dupuys—an' dat always some satisfaction.'

The men were now thoroughly inflamed with the hot new rum, and more than one of them began to cry aloud; 'It time to get to de reg'lar business.' But a few still lingered lovingly around the dripping hogshead, catching double handfuls of the fresh spirit in their capacious palms. Presently, one of the women, mad with drink, drew out a short pipe from her filthy pocket and began to fill it to the top with raw tobacco. As she did so, she turned tipsily to a man by her side and asked him for a light. The fellow took a match in his unsteady fingers and struck it on a wooden post, flinging it away when done with among a few small scraps of dry trash that lay by accident upon the ground close by. Trash is the desiccated refuse of cane

from which the juice has been already extracted, and it is ordinarily used as a convenient fuel to feed the crushing-mills and boil the molasses. Dry as tinder, it lighted up with a flare instantaneously, and raised a crackling blaze, whose ruddy glow pleased and delighted the childish minds of the half-drunken negroes. ‘How him burn!’ the woman with the pipe cried excitedly. ‘Sposin’ we set fire to de trash-house! My heart, how him blaze den! Him light up all de mountains! Burn de trash-house! Burn de trash-house! Dat pretty for true! Burn de trash-house!’

Quick as lightning, the tipsiest rioters had idly kicked the burning ends of loose trash among the great stacked heaps of dry cane under the big sheds; and in one second, before Delgado could even strive in vain to

exert his feeble authority, the whole mass had flashed into a single huge sheet of flame, rising fiercely into the evening sky, and reddening with its glow the peaks around, like the lurid glare of a huge volcano. As the flames darted higher and ever higher, licking up the leaves and stalks as they went, the negroes, now fairly loosed from all restraint, leaped and shrieked wildly around them—some of them half-drunk, others absolutely reeling, and all laughing loud with hideous, wild, unearthly laughter, in their devilish, murderous merriment. Delgado alone saw with horror that his great scheme of liberation was being fast rendered ultimately hopeless, and could only now concentrate his attention upon his minor plan of personal vengeance against the Dupuy family. Port-of-Spain would be fairly roused by the

blaze in half an hour, but at least there was time to murder outright the one offending Orange Grove household.

For a few minutes, helpless and resourceless, he allowed the half-tipsy excited creatures to dance madly around the flaring fire, and to leap and gesticulate with African ferocity in the red glare of the rapidly burning trash-house. ‘Let dem wear out de rum,’ he cried bitterly to Pourtalès: ‘de heat help to sweat it out ob dem. But in a minute, de Dupuys gwine to be down upon us wit de constables an’ de soldiers, if dem doan’t make haste to kill dem beforehand.’

Soon the drunken rioters themselves began to remember that burning trash-houses and stealing rum was not the only form of amusement they had proposed to themselves for that evening’s entertainment. ‘Kill de

buckra!—kill de buckra!’ more than one of them now yelled out fiercely at the top of his voice, brandishing his cutlass. ‘Buckra country for us! Colour for colour! Kill dem all! Kill de buckra!’

Delgado seized at once upon the slender opportunity. ‘Me fren’s,’ he shrieked aloud, raising his palms once more imploringly to heaven, ‘kill dem, kill dem! Follow me! Hallelujah! I gwine to lead you to kill de buckra!’

Most of the negroes, recalled to duty by the old African’s angry voice, now fell once more into their rude marching order; but one or two of them, and those the tipsiest, began to turn back wistfully in the direction of the little pool of new rum that lay sparkling in the glare like molten gold in front of the still running hogshead. Louis

Delgado looked at them with the fierce contempt of a strong mind for such incomprehensible vacillating weakness. Wrenching his pistol once more from the tipsy grasp of the man who had first seized it, he pointed it in a threatening attitude at the head of the foremost negro among the recalcitrant drunkards. 'Dis time I tellin' you true,' he cried fiercely, in a tone of unmistakable wrath and firmness. 'De first man dat take a single step nearer dat infernal liquor, so help me God, I blow his brains out !'

Reckless with drink, and unable to believe in his leader's firmness, the foremost man took a step or two, laughing a drunken laugh meanwhile, in the forbidden direction, and then turned round again, grinning like a baboon, towards Louis Delgado.

He had better have trifled with an angry

tiger. The fierce old African did not hesitate or palter for a single second; pulling the trigger, he fired straight at the grinning face of the drunken renegade. The shot rang sharp and clear against the fellow's teeth, and passed downward through the back of his head, killing him instantaneously. He fell like a log in the pool of new rum, and reddened the stream even as they looked with the quick flow of crimson blood from the mangled arteries.

Delgado himself hardly paused a second to glance contemptuously at the fallen recalcitrant. 'Now, me fren's,' he cried firmly, kicking the corpse in his wrath, and with his eyes twitching in a terrible fashion, 'whoebber else disobeys orders, I gwine to shoot him dead dat very minute, same as I shoot dat good-for-nuffin disobedient naygur

dar! We has got to kill de buckra to-night, an' ebbery man ob you must follow me now to kill dem 'mediately. De Lard delibber dem into our hand! Follow me, an' colour for colour!'

At the word, the last recalcitrants, awed into sobriety for the moment by the sudden and ghastly death of their companion, turned trembling to their place in the rude ranks, and began once more to march on in serried order after Louis Delgado. And with one voice, the tumultuous rabble, putting itself again in rapid motion towards Orange Grove, shrieked aloud once more the terrible watch-words: 'Colour for colour! Kill de buckra!'

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MR. DUPUY was seated quietly at dinner in his own dining-room, with Nora at the opposite end of the table, and Uncle 'Zekiel, the butler, in red plush waistcoat as usual, standing solemnly behind his chair. Mr. Dupuy was in excellent spirits that evening, in spite of the little affair last night, for the cane had cut very heavy, and the boiling was progressing in the most admirable manner. He sipped his glass of St. Emilion (as imported) with the slow, easy air of a person at peace with himself and with all creation. The world at large seemed just that moment to suit him

excellently. ‘Nora, my dear,’ he drawled out lazily, with the unctuous deliberateness of the full-blooded man well-fed, ‘this is a capital pine-apple certainly—a Ripley, I perceive ; far superior in flavour, Ripleys, to the cheap common black sugar-pines : always insist upon getting Ripleys.—I think, if you please, I’ll take another piece of that pine-apple.’

Nora cut him a good thick slice from the centre of the fruit—it is only in England that people commit the vulgarian atrocity of cutting pine in thin layers—and laid down the knife with a stifled yawn upon the tall dessert dish. She was evidently bored—very deeply bored indeed. Orange Grove without Harry Noel began to seem a trifle dull ; and it must be confessed that to live for months together with an old gentleman of Mr. Dupuy’s

sluggish temperament was scarcely a lively mode of life for a pretty, volatile, laughter-loving girl of twenty, like little Nora. ‘What’s this, papa,’ she asked languidly, just by way of keeping up the conversation, ‘about the negroes here in Westmoreland being so dreadfully discontented? Somebody was telling me’—Nora prudently suppressed Marian Hawthorn’s name, for fear of an explosion—‘that there’s a great deal of stir and ferment among the plantation hands. What are they bothering and worrying about now, I wonder?’

Mr. Dupuy rolled the remainder of his glassful of claret on his discriminative palate, very reflectively, for half a minute or so, and then answered in his most leisurely fashion: ‘Lies, lies—a pack of lies, the whole lot of it, Nora. I know who you heard that from,

though you won't tell me so. You heard it from some of your fine coloured friends there, over at Mulberry.—Now, don't deny it, for I won't believe you. When I say a thing, you know I mean it. You heard it, I say, from some of these wretched, disaffected coloured people. And there isn't a word of truth in the whole story—not a syllable—not a shadow—not a grain—not a penumbra. Absolute falsehood, the entire lot of it, got up by these designing radical coloured people, on purpose to serve their own private purposes. I assure you, Nora, there isn't in the whole world a finer, better paid, better fed, better treated, or more happy and contented peasantry than our own comfortable West Indian negroes. For my part, I can't conceive what on earth they've ever got to be discontented about.'

‘But, papa, they *do* say there’s a great chance of a regular rising.’

‘Rising, my dear!—rising! Did you say a rising? Ho, ho! that’s really too ridiculous! What, these niggers rise in revolt against the white people! Why, my dear child, they’d never dare to do it. A pack of cowardly, miserable, quaking and quavering nigger blackguards. Rise, indeed! I’d like to see them try it! O no; nothing of the sort. Somebody’s been imposing on you. They’re a precious sight too afraid of us, ever to think of venturing upon a regular rising. Show me a nigger, I always say to anybody who talks that sort of precious nonsense to me, and I’ll show you an infernal coward, and a thief too, and a liar, and a vagabond.—’Zekiel, you rascal, pour me out another glass of claret, sir, this minute, will you!’

Uncle 'Zekiel poured out the claret for his red-faced master with a countenance wholly unclouded by this violent denunciation of his own race ; to say the truth, the old butler was too much accustomed to similar sentiments from Mr. Dupuy's lips even to notice particularly what his master was saying. He smiled and grinned, and showed his own white teeth good-humouredly as he laid down the claret jug, exactly as though Mr. Dupuy had been ascribing to the African race in general, and to himself in particular, all the virtues and excellences ever observed in the most abstractly perfect human character.

‘No,’ Mr. Dupuy went on dogmatically, ‘they won’t rise : a pack of mean-spirited, cowardly, ignorant vagabonds as ever were born, the niggers, the whole lot of them. I never knew a nigger yet who had a single

ounce of courage in him. You might walk over them, and trample them down in heavy riding-boots, and they wouldn't so much as dare to raise a finger against you. And besides, what the dickens have they got to rise for? Haven't they got everything they can ever expect to have? Haven't they got their freedom and their cottages? But they're always grumbling, always grumbling about something or other—a set of idle, lazy, discontented vagabonds as ever I set eyes on!’

‘I thought you said just now,’ Nora put in with a provoking smile, ‘they were the finest, happiest, and most contented peasantry to be found anywhere.’

There was nothing more annoying to Mr. Dupuy than to have one of his frequent conversational inconsistencies ruthlessly brought

home to him by his own daughter—the only person in the whole world who would ever have ventured upon taking such an unwarrantable liberty. So he laid down his glass of claret with a forced smile, and by way of changing the subject, said unconcernedly : ‘ Bless my soul, what on earth can all that glare be over yonder ? Upon my word, now I look at it, I fancy, Nora, it seems to come from the direction of the trash-houses.’

Uncle Zekiel, standing up behind his master’s chair, and gazing outward, could see more easily over the dining-table, and out through the open doorway of the room, to the hillside beyond, where the glare came from. In a moment, he realised the full meaning of the unwonted blaze, and cried out sharply, in his shrill old tones : ‘ O sah, O sah ! de naygurs hab risen, an’ dem burnin’

de trash-houses, dem burnin' de trash-houses !'

Mr. Dupuy, aghast with righteous anger and astonishment, could hardly believe his own ears at this unparalleled piece of nigger impertinence coming from so old a servant as Uncle 'Zekiel. He turned round upon his trusty butler slowly and solemnly, chair and all, and with his two hands planted firmly on his capacious knees, he said in his most awful voice : ' 'Zekiel, I'm quite at a loss to understand what you can mean by such conduct. Didn't you hear me distinctly say to Miss Nora this very minute that the niggers don't rise, won't rise, can't rise, and never have risen? How dare you, sir, how dare you contradict me to my very face in this disgraceful, unaccountable manner ?'

But Uncle 'Zekiel, quite convinced in his

own mind of the correctness of his own hasty inference, could only repeat, more and more energetically every minute: 'It de trut' I tellin' you, sah; it de trut' I tellin' you. Naygur hab risen, runnin' an' shoutin', kickin' fire about, an' burnin' de trash-houses!'

Mr. Dupuy rose from the table, pale but incredulous. Nora jumped up, white and terrified, but with a mute look of horror-struck appeal to Uncle 'Zekiel. 'Doan't you be afraid, missy,' the old man whispered to her in a loud undertone; 'we fight all de naygur in all Trinidad before we let dem hurt a single hair ob your sweet, pretty, white little head, dearie.'

At that moment, for the first time, a loud shout burst suddenly upon their astonished ears, a mingled tumultuous yell of 'Kill de

buckra—kill de buckra!’ broken by deep African guttural mumblings, and the crackling noise of the wild flames among the dry cane-refuse. It was the shout that the negroes raised as Delgado called them back from the untimely fire to their proper work of bloodshed and massacre.

In her speechless terror, Nora flung herself upon her father’s arms, and gazed out upon the ever-reddening glare beyond with unspeakable alarm.

Next minute, the cry from without rose again louder and louder: ‘Buckra country for us! Kill de buckra! Colour for colour! Kill dem—kill dem!’ And then, another deep negro voice, clearer and shriller far than all of them, broke the deathly stillness that succeeded for a second, with the perfectly audible and awful words: ‘Follow me! I

gwine to lead you to kill de Dupuys an' all de buckra!'

'Zekiel!' Mr. Dupuy said, coming to himself, and taking down his walking-stick with that calm unshaken courage in which the white West Indian has never been found lacking in the hour of danger—'Zekiel, come with me! I must go out at once and quell these rioters.'

Nora gazed at him in blank dismay. 'Papa, papa!' she cried breathlessly, 'you're not going out to them just with your stick, are you? You're not going out alone to all these wretches without even so much as a gun or a pistol!'

'My dear,' Mr. Dupuy answered, coolly and collectedly, disengaging himself from her arms not without some quiet natural tenderness, 'don't be alarmed. You don't under-

stand these people as well as I do. I'm a magistrate for the county: they'll respect my position. The moment I come near, they'll all disperse and grow as mild as babies.'

And even as he spoke, the confused shrieks of the women surged closer and closer upon their ears: 'Kill dem—kill dem! De liquor—de liquor!'

'Ah! I told you so,' Mr. Dupuy murmured, half to himself, very complacently, with a deep breath. 'Only a foolish set o' tipsy negresses, waking and rum-drinking, and kicking about firebrands.'

For another second there was a slight pause again, while one might count twenty; and then the report of a pistol rang out clear and definite upon the startled air from the direction of the flaring trash-houses. It wa

Delgado's pistol, shooting down the tipsy recalcitrant.

‘This means business!’ Mr. Dupuy ejaculated, raising his voice, with a sidelong glance at poor trembling Nora. — ‘Come along, Zekiel; come along all of you. We must go out at once and quiet them or disperse them. — Dick, Thomas, Emilius, Robert, Jo, Mark Antony! every one of you! come along with me, come along with me, and see to the trash-houses before these tipsy wretches have utterly destroyed them!’

CHAPTER XXXVII.

HALF-WAY down to the blazing trash-houses, Mr. Dupuy and his little band of black allies, all armed only with the sticks they had hastily seized from the stand in the piazza, came on a sudden face to face with the wild and frantic mob of half-tipsy rioters. 'Halt!' Mr. Dupuy called out in a cool and unmoved tone of command to the reckless insurgents, as they marched on in irregular order, brandishing their cutlasses wildly in the flickering firelight. 'You infernal blackguards, what the devil are you doing here, and what do you mean by firing and burning my trash-houses?'

By the ruddy light of the lurid blaze behind him, Louis Delgado recognised at once the familiar face of his dearest enemy. ‘Me fren’s,’ he shrieked, in a loud outburst of gratified vindictiveness, ‘dis is him—dis is him—dis de buckra Dupuy we come to kill now! De Lard has delibbered him into our hands witout so much as gib us de trouble ob go an’ attack him.’

But before even Delgado could bring down with savage joy his uplifted weapon on his hated enemy’s bare head, Mr. Dupuy had stepped boldly and energetically forward, and catching the wiry African by his outstretched arm, had cried aloud in his coolest and most deliberate accents: ‘Louis Delgado, put down your cutlass. As a magistrate for this island, I arrest you for riot.’

His resolute boldness was not without its

due effect. For just the swing of a pendulum there was a profound silence, and that great mob of strangely beraged and rum-maddened negroes held its breath irresolutely, doubting in its own six hundred vacillating souls which of the two things rather to do—whether to yield as usual to the accustomed authority of that one bold and solitary white man, the accredited mouthpiece of law and order, or else to rush forward madly and hack him then and there into a thousand pieces with African ferocity. So instinctive in the West Indian negro's nature is the hereditary respect for European blood, that even though they had come there for the very purpose of massacring and mutilating the defenceless buckra, they stood appalled, now the actual crisis had fairly arrived, at the bare idea of venturing to dispute the question

openly with the one lone and unarmed white man.

But Louis Delgado, African born that he was, had no such lingering West Indian prejudices. Disengaging his sinewy captive arm from Mr. Dupuy's flabby grasp with a sudden jerk, he lifted his cutlass once more high into the air, and held it, glittering, for the twinkling of an eye, above the old man's defenceless head. One moment, Uncle 'Zekiel saw it gleam fearfully in the red glare of the burning trash-houses; the next, it had fallen on Mr. Dupuy's shoulder, and the blood was spurting out in crimson splashes over his white tie and open shirt-front, in which he had risen but three minutes before so unsuspectingly from his own dinner-table.

The old planter reeled terribly before the violent force of that staggering blow, but

kept his face turned bravely with undiminished courage towards the exultant enemy. At the sight of the gushing blood, however—the proud buckra blood, that shows so visibly on the delicate white European skin—the negroes behind set up a loud and horrid peal of unearthly laughter, and rushed forward, all their hesitation flung away at once, closing round him in a thickly packed body—like a bully at football—each eager not to lose his own share in the delightful excitement of hacking him to pieces. A dozen cutlasses gleamed aloft at once in the bare black arms, and a dozen more blows were aimed at the wounded man fiercely by as many hideous, grinning rioters.

Uncle 'Zekiel and the household negroes, oblivious and almost unconscious of themselves, as domestic servants of their race

always are in the presence of danger for their master or his family, pressed around the reeling white man in a serried ring, and with their sticks and arms, a frail barrier, strove manfully to resist the fierce onslaught of the yelling and leaping plantation negroes. In spite of what Mr. Dupuy had just been saying about the negroes being all alike cowards, the petty handful of faithful blacks, forming a close and firm semicircle in front of their wounded master, fought like wild beasts at bay before their helpless whelps, with hands, and arms, and legs, and teeth, and sticks, and elbows, opposing stoutly, by fair means and foul, the ever-pressing sea of wild rioters. As they fought, they kept yielding slowly but cautiously before the steady pressure; and Mr. Dupuy, reeling and staggering he knew not how, but with his face kept ever, like a

fighting Dupuy, turned dauntlessly towards the surging enemy, retreated slowly backward step by step in the direction of his own piazza. Just as he reached the bottom of the steps, Uncle 'Zekiel meanwhile shielding and protecting him manfully with his portly person, a woman rushed forth from the mass of the rioters, and with hideous shrieks of 'Hallelujah, hallelujah!' hacked him once more with her blunt cutlass upon the ribs and body.

Mr. Dupuy, faint and feeble from loss of blood, but still cool and collected as ever, groped his way ever backward up the steps, in a blind, reeling, failing fashion, and stood at last at bay in the doorway of the piazza, with his faithful bodyguard, wounded and bleeding freely like himself, still closing resolutely around him.

‘This will do, ’Zekiel,’ he gasped out incoherently, as he reached the top landing. ‘In the pass of the doorway. Stop them easily. Fire rouse the military. Hold the house for half an hour—help from the Governor. Quick, quick ! give me the pistol.’

Even as he spoke, a small white hand, delicate and bloodless, appearing suddenly from the room behind him, placed his little revolver, cocked and loaded, between the trembling fingers of his left hand, for the right lay already hacked and useless, hanging idly by his side in limp helplessness.

‘Nora, my dear,’ the old man sobbed out in a half-articulate gurgling voice, ‘go back—go back this moment to the boudoir. Back garden ; slip away quietly—no place for you, Orange Grove, this evening. Slight trouble with the plantation blacks. Quell the rioters.

—Close up, 'Zekiel.—Close up, Dick, Thomas, Jo, Robert, Emilius, Mark Antony!' And with a quivering hand, standing there alone in the narrow doorway, while the mob below swarmed and pressed up the piazza steps in wild confusion, the wounded planter fired the revolver, with no definite aim, blank into the surging midst of the mob, and let his left hand drop as he did so, white and fainting by his side, with his vain endeavour.

The bullet had hit one of the negro women full in the thigh, and it only served still further to madden and enrage the clamouring mob, now frantically thirsty for the buckra blood.

'Him wounded Hannah—him wounded Hannah!' the negroes yelled in their buzzing indignation; and at the word, they rushed forward once more with mad gesticulations,

those behind pushing those in front against the weak yielding wall of Orange Grove servants, and all menacing horribly with their blood-reddened cutlasses, as they shrieked aloud frantically: 'Kill him—kill him!'

The servants still held firm with undaunted courage, and rallied bravely round their tottering master; but the onslaught was now far too fierce for them, and one by one they were thrust back helpless by the raging mob, who nevertheless abstained so far as possible from hurting any one of them, aiming all their blows directly at the detested white man himself alone. If by chance at any moment a cutlass came down unintentionally upon the broad backs of the negro defenders, a cry arose at once from the women in the rear of 'Doan't hit him—doan't

hit him. Him me brudder. Colour for colour ! Kill de buckra ! Hallelujah !'

And all this time, Nora Dupuy looked on from behind, holding her bloodless hands clasped downward in mute agony, not so much afraid as expectant, with Aunt Clemmy and the women-servants holding her and comforting her with well-meant negro consolation, under the heavy mahogany arch of the dining-room doorway.

At last, Delgado, standing now on the topmost step, and half within the area of the piazza, aimed one terrible slashing cut at the old planter, as he stood supporting himself feebly by a piece of the woodwork, and hacked him down, a heavy mass, upon the ground before them with a wild African cry of vengeance. The poor old man fell, insensible, in a little pool of his own blood ; and

the Orange Grove negroes, giving way finally before the irresistible press of their overwhelming opponents, left him there alone, surrounded on every side by the frantic mob of enraged insurgents.

Nora, clasping her hands tighter than ever, and immovable as a statue, stood there still, without uttering a cry or speaking a word—as cold and white and motionless as marble.

‘Hack him to pieces!’ ‘Cut out his heart!’ ‘Him doan’t dead yet!’ ‘Him only faintin’!’ ‘Burn him — burn him!’ A chorus of cries rose incoherently from the six hundred lips of the victorious negroes. And as they shouted, they mangled and mutilated the old man’s body with their blunt cutlasses in a way perfectly hideous to look at; the women especially crowding round to do their

best at kicking and insulting their fallen enemy.

‘Tank de Lard—tank de Lard!’ Delgado, now drunk with blood, shouted out fiercely to his frenzied followers. ‘We done killed de ole man. Now we gwine to kill de missy!’

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

EVEN as Delgado stood there still on the steps of the piazza, waving his blood-stained cutlass fiercely about his head, and setting his foot contemptuously on Mr. Dupuy's prostrate and bleeding body, Harry Noel tore up the path that led from Dick Castello's house at Savannah Garden, and halted suddenly in blank amazement in front of the doorway—Harry Noel, in evening dress, hatless and spurless ; just as he had risen in horror from his dinner, and riding his new mare without even a saddle, in his hot haste to see the cause of the unexpected tumult at the Dupuys' estate.

The fierce red glare of the burning cane-houses had roused him unawares at Savannah Garden in the midst of his coffee; and the cries of the negroes and the sound of pistol-shots had cast him into a frantic fever of anxiety for Nora's safety. 'The niggers have risen, by Jove!' Dick Castello cried aloud, as the flames rose higher and higher above the blazing cane-houses. 'They must be attacking old Dupuy; and if once their blood's up, you may take your oath upon it, Noel, they won't leave him until they've fairly murdered him.'

Harry Noel didn't wait a moment to hear any further conjectures of his host's on the subject, but darting round to the stables bareheaded, clapped a bit forthwith into his mare's mouth, jumped on her back just as she stood, in a perfect frenzy of fear and

excitement, and tore along the narrow winding road that led by tortuous stretches to Orange Grove, as fast as his frightened horse's legs could possibly carry him.

As he leaped eagerly from his mount to the ground in the midst of all that hideous din and uproar and mingled confusion, Delgado was just calling on his fellow-blacks to follow him boldly into the house and to 'Kill de missy;' and the Orange Grove negroes, cowed and terrified now that their master had fallen bodily before them, were beginning to drop back, trembling, into the rooms behind, and allow the frantic and triumphant rioters to have their own way unmolested. In a moment, Harry took in the full terror of the scene—saw Mr. Dupuy's body lying, a mass of hacked and bleeding wounds, upon the wooden floor of the front

piazza ; saw the infuriated negroes pressing on eagerly with their cutlasses lifted aloft, now fairly drunk with the first taste of buckra blood ; and Delgado in front of them all, leaping wildly, and gesticulating in frantic rage with all his arms and hands and fingers, as he drove back the terrified servants through the heavy old mahogany doorway of the great drawing-room into the room that opened out behind towards Nora's own little sacred boudoir.

Harry had no weapon of any sort with him except the frail riding-whip he carried in his hand ; but without waiting for a second, without thinking for one instant of the surrounding danger, he rushed frantically up the piazza steps, pushed the astonished rioters to right and left with his powerful arms, jumped over the senseless planter's prostrate

body, swept past Delgado into the narrow doorway, and there stood confronting the savage ringleader boldly, his little riding-whip raised high above his proud head with a fierce and threatening angry gesture. ‘Stop there!’ he cried, in a voice of stern command, that even in that supreme moment of passion and triumph had its full effect upon the enraged negroes. ‘Stop there, you mean-spirited villains and murderers! Not a step farther — not a step farther, I tell you! Cowards, cowards, cowards, every one of you, to kill a poor old man like that upon his own staircase, and to threaten a helpless innocent lady.’

As he spoke, he laid his hand heavily upon Louis Delgado’s bony shoulder, and pushed the old negro steadily backward, out of the doorway and through the piazza, to the front steps, where Mr. Dupuy’s body was still lying

untended and bleeding profusely. ‘Stand back, you old devil!’ he cried out fiercely and authoritatively. ‘Stand back this minute, and put down your infernal cutlass! You shall not hurt another hair of their heads, I tell you. Cowards, cowards, cowards, every man of you. If you want to fight the whites, you cowardly scoundrels you, why don’t you fight the men like yourselves, openly and straightforward, instead of coming by night, without note or warning, burning and hacking and killing and destroying, and waging war against defenceless old men and women and children?’

The negroes fell back a little grudgingly as he spoke, and answered him only by the loud and deep guttural cry—an inarticulate, horribly inhuman gurgle—which is their sole possible form of speech in the very paroxysm

of African passion. Louis Delgado held his cutlass half doubtfully in his uplifted hand: he had tasted blood once now; he had laid himself open to the fierce vengeance of the English law; he was sorely tempted in the whirlwind of the moment to cut down Harry Noel too, as he had cut down the white-headed old planter the minute before. But the innate respect of the essentially fighting negro for a resolute opponent held him back deliberating for a moment; and he drew down his cutlass as quickly as he had raised it, divided in mind whether to strike or to permit a parley.

Harry Noel seized the occasion with intuitive strategy. ‘Here you, my friends,’ he cried boldly, turning round towards the cowering Orange Grove servants—‘is this the way you defend your master? Pick him up,

some of you—pick him up this minute, I tell you, and lay him out decently on the sofa over yonder.—There, there; don't be afraid. Not one of these confounded rogues and cowards dares to touch you or come one pace nearer you as long as you're doing it. If he does, by George! cutlass or no cutlass, I'll break this riding-whip to pieces, I tell you, across his damned black back as soon as look at him.' And he brandished the whip angrily in front of him, towards the mad and howling group of angry rioters, held at bay for the moment on the piazza steps by that solitary undismayed young Englishman with his one frail and ridiculous weapon.

The rioters howled all the louder at his words, and leaped and grinned and chattered and gesticulated like wild beasts behind an iron railing; but not one of them ventured to

be the first in aiming a blow with his deadly implement at Harry Noel. They only yelled once more incomprehensibly in their deep gutturals, and made hideous wild grimaces, and waved their cutlasses frantically around them with horrible inarticulate negro imprecations.

But Harry stood there firm and unyielding, facing the maddened crowd with his imperious manner, and overawing them in spite of themselves with that strange power of a superior race over the inferior in such critical moments of intense passion.

The Orange Grove servants, having fresh courage put into their failing breasts once more, by the inspiring presence of a white man at their sides, and being true at heart to their poor master, as negro house-servants always are and always have been in the worst

extremities, took advantage of the momentary lull in the storm to do as Harry told them, and lift Mr. Dupuy's body up from the ground, laying it carefully on the piazza sofa. 'That's better,' Harry said, as they finished their task.—'Now, we must go on and drive away these murderous rascals. If we don't drive them away, my good friends, they'll kill Miss Nora—they'll kill Miss Nora. Would you have it said of you that you let a parcel of murderous plantation rioters kill your own dead master's daughter right before your very faces?'

As he spoke, he saw a pale face, pale, not with fear, but with terrible anger, standing mute and immovable beside him; and next moment he heard Nora Dupuy's voice crying out deeply, in the very echo of his own angry words: 'Cowards, cowards!'

At the sight of the hated Dupuy features, the frenzied plantation hands seemed to work themselves up into a fresh access of ungovernable fury. With indescribable writhings and mouthings and grimaces, their hatred and vengeance found articulate voice for a moment at least, and they cried aloud like one man: 'Kill her—kill her! Kill de missy! Kill her—kill her!'

'Give me a pistol,' Harry Noel exclaimed wildly to the friendly negroes close behind his back: 'a gun—a knife—a cutlass—anything!'

'We got nuffin, sah,' Uncle 'Zekiel answered, blankly and whiningly, now helpless as a child before the sudden inundation of armed rioters, for without his master he could do nothing.

Harry looked around him desperately for

a moment, then, advancing a step with hasty premeditation, he wrenched a cutlass suddenly by an unexpected snatch from one of the foremost batch of rioters, and stepped back with it once more unhurt, as if by miracle, into the narrow pass of the mahogany doorway.

‘Stand away, Miss Dupuy!’ he cried to her earnestly. ‘If you value your life, stand back, stand back, I beg of you. This is no place for you to-night. Run, run! If you don’t escape, there’ll be more murder done presently.’

‘I shall not go,’ Nora answered, clenching her fist hard and knitting her brow sternly, ‘as long as one of these abominable wretches dares to stop without permission upon my father’s piazza.’

‘Then stand away, you there!’ Harry

shouted aloud to the surging mob ; ‘ stand away this moment, every one of you ! Whoever steps one single step nearer this lady behind me, by Heaven, I’ll hack him down without pity that minute, as you’d hack down a stinging cactus-tree ! ’

Delgado stood still and hesitated once more, with strange irresolution—he didn’t like to hit the brown man—but Isaac Pourtalès, lifting his cutlass wildly above his head, took a step in front and brought it down with a fierce swish towards Harry’s skull, in spite of kinship. Harry parried it dexterously with his own cutlass, like a man who has learned what fencing means ; and then, rushing, mad with rage, at the astonished Isaac before he knew what to look for, brought down a heavy blow upon his right shoulder, that disabled his opponent outright, and made

him drop at once his useless weapon idly by his side. 'Take that, you damned nigger dog!' Harry hissed out fiercely through his close-set teeth; 'and if any other confounded nigger among you all dares to take a single step nearer in the same direction, he'll get as much and more, too, than this insolent fellow here has got for his trouble.'

The contemptuous phrase once more roused all the negroes' anger. 'Who you call nigger, den?' they cried out fiercely, leaping in a body like wild beasts upon him. 'Kill him—kill him! Him doan't fit to live. Kill him—kill him, dis minute—kill him!'

But Delgado, some strange element of compassion for the remote blood of his own race still rising up instinctively and mysteriously within him, held back the two or three

foremost among the pressing mass with his sinewy arm. ‘No, no, me fren’s,’ he shouted angrily, ‘doan’t kill him, doan’t kill him. Tiger no eat tiger, ole-time folk say; tiger no eat tiger. Him is nigger himself. Him is Isaac Pourtalès’ own cousin.—Doan’t kill him. His mudder doan’t nobody, I tell you, me fren’s, but coloured gal, de same as yours is—coloured gal from ole Barbadoes. I sayin’ to you, me fren’s, ole-time folk has true proverb, tiger no eat tiger.’

The sea of angry black faces swelled up and down wildly and dubiously for a moment, and then, with the sudden fitful changefulness of negro emotion, two or three voices, the women’s especially, called aloud, with sobs and shrieks: ‘Doan’t kill him—doan’t kill him! Him me brudder—him me brudder. Doan’t kill him! Hallelujah!’

Harry looked at them savagely, with knit brows and firm-set teeth, his cutlass poised ready to strike in one hand, and his whole attitude that of a forlorn-hope at bay against overwhelming and irresistible numbers.

‘You black devils!’ he cried out fiercely, flinging the words in their faces, as it were, with a concentrated power of insult and hatred, ‘I won’t owe my life to that shameful plea, you infernal cowards. Perhaps I may have a drop or two of your damned black blood flowing somewhere in my veins somehow, and perhaps I mayn’t again; but whether I have or whether I haven’t, I wouldn’t for dear life itself acknowledge kindred with such a pack of cowardly vagabonds and murderers as you, who would hack an old man brutally to death like that,

before his own poor daughter's face, helplessly, upon his own staircase.'

'Mr. Noel,' Nora echoed, in a clear defiant tone, nothing trembling, from close behind him, 'that was well said—that was bravely spoken! Let them come on and kill us if they will, the wretches. We're not afraid of them, we're not afraid of them.'

'Miss Dupuy,' Harry cried earnestly, looking back towards her with a face of eager entreaty, 'save yourself! for God's sake, save yourself. There's still time even now to escape—by the garden-gate—to Hawthorn's—while these wretches here are busy murdering me.'

At the word, Louis Delgado sprang forward once more, cutlass in hand, no longer undecided, and with one blow on the top of the head felled Harry Noel heavily to the ground.

That familiar adjuration, so comparatively powerless upon an English mob at home in England, acted like magic on the fierce and half-naked throng of ignorant and superstitious plantation negroes. It was indeed to them a mighty word to conjure with, that loud challenge in the name of the great distant Queen, whose reality seemed as far away from them and as utterly removed from their little sphere as heaven itself. They dropped their cutlasses instantaneously, for a brief moment of doubt and hesitation; a few voices still shouted fiercely, 'Kill him—kill him!' and then a unanimous cry arose among all the surging mass of wild and scowling black humanity: 'Mr. Hawthorn, Mr. Hawthorn! Him come in Missis Queen name, so gib us warnin.' Now us gwine to get justice. Mr. Hawthorn, Mr. Hawthorn!'

But while the creole-born plantation hands thus welcomed eagerly what they looked upon, in their simplicity, as the Queen's direct mouthpiece and representative, Louis Delgado, his face distorted with rage, and his arms plying his cutlass desperately, frowned and gnashed his teeth more fiercely than ever with rage and disappointment; for his wild African passion was now fully aroused, and like the tiger that has once tasted blood, he didn't want to be balked of the final vengeful delight of hacking his helpless victim slowly to pieces in a long-drawn torture. 'Missis Queen!' he cried contemptuously, turning round and brandishing his cutlass with savage joy once more before the eyes of his half-sobered companions—'Missis Queen, him say dar! Ha, ha, what him say dat for? What de Queen to me, I want you tell me? I

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doan't care for Queen, or judge, or magistrate, or nuffin! I gwine to kill all de white men togedder, in all Trinidad, de Lard helpin' me!'

As he spoke, Edward Hawthorn jumped hastily from his saddle, and advanced with long strides towards the fiercely gesticulating and mumbling African. The plantation negroes, cowed and tamed for the moment by Edward's bold and resolute presence, and overawed by the great name of that mysterious, unknown, half-mythical Queen Victoria, beyond the vast illimitable ocean, fell back sullenly to right and left, and made a little lane through the middle of the crowd for the Queen's representative to mount the staircase. Edward strode up, without casting a single glance on either side, to where Delgado stood savagely beside Harry Noel's fallen body, and

put his right hand with an air of indisputable authority upon the frantic African's uplifted arm. Delgado tried to shake him off suddenly with a quick, adroit, convulsive movement; but Edward's grip was tight and vice-like, and he held the black arm powerless in his grasp, as he spoke aloud a few words in some unknown language, which sounded to the group of wondering negroes like utter gibberish—or perhaps some strange spell with which the representative of Queen Victoria knew how to conjure by some still more potent and terrible obeah than even Delgado's.

But Louis Delgado alone knew that the words were pure Arabic, and that Edward Hawthorn grasped his arm, 'In the name of Allah, the All-wise, the most Powerful!'

At the sound of that mighty spell, a

terrible one, indeed, to the fierce old half-christianised Mohammedan, Delgado's arm, too, dropped powerless to his trembling side, and he fell back, gnashing his teeth like a bulldog balked of a fight, into the general mass of plantation negroes. There he stood, dazed and stunned apparently, leaning up sulkily against the piazza post, but speaking not a word to either party for good or for evil

The lull was but for a minute; and Edward Hawthorn saw at once that if he was to gain any permanent advantage by the momentary change of feeling in the fickle negro mob, he must keep their attention distracted for a while, till their savage passions had time to cool a little, and the effect of this unwonted orgy of fire and bloodshed had passed away before the influence of sober reflection. A negro crowd is like a single

creature of impulse—swayed to and fro a hundred times more easily than even a European mob by every momentary passing wave of anger or of feeling.

‘Take up Mr. Noel and Miss Dupuy,’ he said aside in his cool commanding tone to the Orange Grove servants :—‘ Mr. Noel isn’t dead—I see him breathing yet—and lay them on a bed and look after them, while I speak to these angry people.’ Then he turned, mastering himself with an effort for that terrible crisis, and taking a chair from the piazza, he mounted it quickly, and began to speak in a loud voice, unbroken by a single tremor of fear, like one addressing a public meeting, to the great sea of wondering, upturned black faces, lighted up from behind in lurid gleams by the red glare of the still blazing cane-houses.

‘My friends,’ he said, holding his hand before him, palm outward, in a mute appeal for silence and a fair hearing, ‘listen to me for a moment. I want to speak to you ; I want to help you to what you yourselves are blindly seeking. I am here to-night as Queen Victoria’s delegate and representative. Queen Victoria has your welfare and interest at heart ; and she has sent me out to this island to do equal justice between black man and white man, and to see that no one oppresses another by force or fraud, by lawlessness or cunning. As you all know, I am in part a man of your own blood ; and Queen Victoria, in sending me out to judge between you, and in appointing so many of your own race to posts of honour here in Trinidad, has shown her wish to favour no one particular class or colour to the detriment or humiliation of the

others. But in doing as I see you have done to-night—in burning down factories, in attacking houses, in killing or trying to kill your own employers, and helpless women, and men who have done no crime against you except trying to protect your victims from your cruel vengeance—in doing this, my friends, you have not done wisely. That is not the way to get what you want from Queen Victoria.—What is it you want? Tell me that. That is the first thing. If it is anything reasonable, the Queen will grant it. What do you want from Queen Victoria?’

With one voice the whole crowd of lurid up-turned black faces answered loudly and earnestly: ‘Justice, Justice!’

Edward paused a moment, with rhetorical skill, and looked down at the mob

of shouting lips with a face half of sternness and half of benevolence. 'My friends,' he said again, 'you shall have justice. You haven't always had it in the past—that I know and regret; but you shall have it, trust me, henceforth in the future. Listen to me. I know you have often suffered injustice. Your rights have not been always respected, and your feelings have many times been ruthlessly trampled upon. Nobody sympathises with you more fully than I do. But just because I sympathise with you so greatly, I feel it my duty to warn you most earnestly against acting any longer as you have been acting this evening. I am your friend—you know I am your friend. From me, I trust you have never had anything less than equal justice.'

‘Dat’s true—dat’s true!’ rang in a murmuring wave of assent from the eager listening crowd of negroes.

‘Well,’ Edward went on, lowering his tone to more persuasive accents, ‘be advised by me, then, and if you want to get what you ask from Queen Victoria, do as I tell you. Disperse to-night quietly and separately. Don’t go off in a body together and talk with one another excitedly around your watch-fires about your wrongs and your grievances. Burn no more factories and cane-houses. Attack no more helpless men and innocent women. Think no more of your rights for the present. But go each man to his own hut, and wait to see what Queen Victoria will do for you.—If you continue foolishly to burn and riot, shall I tell you in plain

words what will happen to you? The governor will be obliged to bring out the soldiers and the volunteers against you; they will call upon you, as I call upon you now, in the Queen's name, to lay down your pistols and your guns and your cutlasses; and if you don't lay them down at once, they'll fire upon you, and disperse you easily. Don't be deceived. Don't believe that because you are more numerous—because there are so many more of you than of the white men—you could conquer them and kill them by main force, if it ever came to open fighting. The soldiers, with their regular drill and their good arms and their constant training, could shoot you all down with the greatest ease, in spite of your numbers and your pistols and your cutlasses. I don't say this to frighten you or to

threaten you ; I say it as your friend, because I don't want you foolishly to expose yourselves to such a terrible butchery and slaughter.'

A murmur went through the crowd once more, and they looked dubiously and inquiringly towards Louis Delgado. But the African gave no sign and made no answer ; he merely stood sullenly still by the post against which he was leaning ; so Edward hastened to reassure the undecided mob of listening negroes by turning quickly to the other side of the moot question.

'Now, listen again,' he said, 'for what I'm going to say to you now is very important. If you will disperse, and go each to his own home, without any further trouble or riot, I will undertake, myself, to go to

England on purpose for you, and tell Queen Victoria herself about all your troubles. I will tell her that you haven't always been justly treated, and I'll try to get new and better laws made in future for you, under which you may secure more justice than you sometimes get under present arrangements. Do you understand me? If you go home at once, I promise to go across the sea and speak to Queen Victoria herself on your behalf, over in England.'

The view of British constitutional procedure implied in Edward Hawthorn's words was not perhaps strictly accurate; but his negro hearers would hardly have felt so much impressed if he had offered to lay their grievances boldly at the foot of that impersonal entity, the Colonial Office; while the idea that they were to

have a direct spokesman, partly of their own blood, with the Queen herself, flattered their simple African susceptibilities and helped to cool their savage anger. Like children as they are, they began to smile and show their great white teeth in infantile satisfaction, as pleasantly as though they had never dreamt ten minutes earlier of hacking Harry Noel's body fiercely into little pieces ; and more than one voice cried out in hearty tones : 'Hoorrah for Mr. Hawthorn ! Him de black man fren'. Gib him a cheer, boys ! Him gwine to 'peak for us to Queen Victoria !'

'Then promise me faithfully,' Edward said, holding out his hand once more before him, 'that you'll all go home this very minute and settle down quietly in your own houses.'

‘We promise, sah,’ a dozen voices answered eagerly.

Edward Hawthorn turned anxiously for a moment to Louis Delgado. ‘My brother,’ he said to him rapidly in Arabic, ‘this is your doing. You must help me now to quiet the people you have first so fiercely and so foolishly excited. Assist me in dispersing them, and I will try to lighten for you the punishment which will surely be inflicted upon you as ringleader, when this is all over.’

But Delgado, propped in a stony attitude against the great wooden post of the piazza, answered still never a word. He stood there to all appearance in stolid and sullen indifference to all that was passing so vividly around him, with his white and bloodshot eyes staring vacantly into the

blank darkness that stretched in front of him, behind the flickering light of the now collapsed and burnt-out cane-houses.

Edward touched him lightly on his bare arm. To his utter horror and amazement, though not cold, it was soft and corpse-like, as in the first hour of death, before rigidity and chilliness have begun to set in. He looked up into the blood-shot eyes. Their staring balls seemed already glazed and vacuous, utterly vacant of the fierce flashing light that had gleamed from the pupils so awfully and savagely but ten minutes before, as he brandished his cutlass with frantic yells above Harry Noel's fallen body. Two of the plantation negroes, attracted by Edward's evident recoil of horror, came forward with simple curiosity, flinging down their cutlasses, and

touched the soft cheeks, not with the reverent touch which a white man feels always due to the sacredness of death, but harshly and rudely, as one might any day touch a senseless piece of stone or timber.

Edward looked at them with a pallid face of mute inquiry. The youngest of the two negroes drew back for a second, overtaken apparently by a superstitious fear, and murmured low in an awe-struck voice: ‘Him dead, sah, dead—stone dead. Dead dis ten minute, since ever you begin to ’peak to de people, sah.’

He was indeed. His suppressed rage at the partial failure of his deeply cherished scheme of vengeance on the hated white men, coming so close upon his paroxysm of triumph over the senseless bodies of Mr. Dupuy.

and Harry Noel, had brought about a sudden fit of cardiac apoplexy. The old African's savage heart had burst outright with conflicting emotions. Leaning back upon the pillar for support, as he felt the blood failing within him, he had died suddenly and unobserved without a word or a cry, and had stood there still, as men will often stand under similar circumstances, propped up against the supporting pillar, in the exact attitude in which death had first overtaken him. In the very crisis of his victory and his defeat, he had been called away suddenly to answer for his conduct before even a higher tribunal than the one with which Edward Hawthorn had so gently and forbearingly threatened him.

The effect of this sudden catastrophe upon the impressionable minds of the excited

negroes was indeed immediate and overwhelming. Lifting up their voices in loud wails and keening, as at their midnight wakes, they cried tremulously one after another: ‘De Lard is against us—de Lard is against us! Ebbery man to your tents, O Israel! De Lard hab killed Delgado—hab killed Delgado—hab smitten him down, for de murder him committed!’ To their unquestioning antique faith, it was the visible judgment of heaven against their insurrection, the blood of Theodore Dupuy and Harry Noel crying out for vengeance from the floor of the piazza, like the blood of righteous Abel long before, crying out for vengeance from the soil of Eden.

More than one of them believed in his heart, too, that the mysterious words in the unknown language which Edward Hawthorn

had muttered over the old African were the spell that had brought down upon him before their very eyes the unseen bolt of the invisible powers. Whether it was obeah, or whether it was imprecation and solemn prayer to the God of heaven, they thought within themselves, in their dim, inarticulate, unspoken fashion, that ‘Mr. Hawthorn word bring down de judgment dat very minute on Louis Delgado.’

In an incredibly short space of time, the great crowd of black faces had melted away as quickly as it came, and Edward Hawthorn was left alone in the piazza, with none but the terrified servants of the Orange Grove household to help him in his task or to listen to his orders. All that night long, across the dark gorge and the black mango grove, they could hear the terrified voices of the

negroes in their huts singing hymns, and crying aloud in strange prayers to God in heaven that the guilt of this murder might not be visited upon their heads, as it had been visited before their very eyes that night on Louis Delgado. To the negro mind, the verdict of fate is the verdict of heaven.

‘Take up his body, too, and lay it down on the sofa,’ Edward said to Uncle ‘Zekiel, still beside himself with terror at the manifold horrors of this tragical evening.

‘I doan’t can dare, sah,’ Uncle ‘Zekiel answered tremulously—‘I doan’t can dare lay me hand upon de corpse, I tellin’ you, sah. De finger ob de Lard has smite Delgado. I doan’t dare to lift an’ carry him.’

‘One of you boys, then, come and help me,’ Edward cried, holding up the corpse with one hand to keep it from falling.

But not one of them dare move a single step nearer to the terrible awe-inspiring object.

At last, finding that no help was forthcoming on any hand, Edward lifted up the ghastly burden all by himself in his own arms, and laid it down reverently and gently on the piazza sofa. 'It is better so,' he murmured to himself slowly and pitifully 'There will be no more blood on either side shed at any rate for this awful evening's sorry business.'

And then at length he had leisure to turn back into the house itself and make inquiries after Mr. Dupuy and Harry and Nora.

CHAPTER XL.

MARIAN was behind in the dining-room and bedrooms with Aunt Clemmy, helping to nurse and tend the sick and wounded as well as she could, in the midst of so much turmoil and danger. When she and Edward had been roused by the sudden glare of the burning cane-houses, reddening the horizon by Orange Grove, and casting weird and fitful shadows from all the mango-trees in front of their little tangled garden, she had been afraid to remain behind alone at Mulberry, and had preferred facing the maddened rioters by her husband's side, to stopping by herself under such circum-

stances among the unfamiliar black servants in her own house. So they had ridden across hurriedly to the Dupuys' together, especially as Marian was no less timid on Nora's account than on her own; and when they reached the little garden gate that led in by the back path, she had slipped up alone, unperceived by the mob, while Edward went round openly to the front door, and tried to appease the angry negroes.

The shouts and yells when she first arrived had proved indeed very frightening and distracting; but after a time, she could guess, from the comparative silence which ensued, that Edward had succeeded in gaining a hearing: and then she and Aunt Clemmy turned with fast-beating hearts to look after the bleeding victims, one of whom at least they gave up from the first as quite dead beyond the reach of hope or recovery.

Nora was naturally the first to come to. She had fainted only; and though, in the crush and press, she had been trampled upon and very roughly handled by the barefooted negroes, she had got off, thanks to their shoeless condition, with little worse than a few ugly cuts and bruises. They laid her tenderly on her own bed, and bathed her brows over and over again with Cologne water; till, after a few minutes, she sat up again, pale and deathly to look at, but proud and haughty and defiant as ever, with her eyes burning very brightly, and an angry quiver playing unchecked about her bloodless lips.

‘Is he dead?’ she asked calmly—as calmly as if it were the most ordinary question on earth, but yet with a curious one of suppressed emotion, that even in that terrible moment

did not wholly escape Marian's quick womanly observation.

‘Your father?’ Marian answered, in a low voice.—‘Dear, dear, you mustn’t excite yourself now. You must be quite quiet, perfectly quiet. You’re not well enough to stand any talking or excitement yet. You must wait to hear about it all, darling, until you’re a little better.’

Nora’s lip curled a trifle as she answered almost disdainfully: ‘I’m not going to lie here and let myself be made an invalid of, while those creatures there are out yonder without my leave still on the piazza. Let me get up and see what has happened.—No; I didn’t mean papa, Marian; I know he’s dead; I saw him lying hacked all to pieces outside on the sofa. I meant Mr. Noel. Have they killed him? Have they killed him? He’s a brave man. Have the wretches killed him?’

‘We think not,’ Marian answered dubiously. ‘He’s in the next room, and two of the servants are there taking care of him.’

Nora rose from the bed with a sudden bound, and stood pale and white, all trembling before them. ‘What are you stopping here wasting your care upon me for, then?’ she asked half angrily. ‘You *think* not—think not, indeed! Is this a time to be thinking and hesitating! Why are you looking after women who go and get fainting-fits, like fools, at the wrong moment? I’m ashamed of myself, almost, for giving way visibly before the wretches—for letting them see I was half afraid of them. But I wasn’t afraid of them for myself, though—not a bit of it, Marian: it was only for—for Mr. Noel.’ She said it after a moment’s brief hesitation, but without the faintest touch of girlish timidity or ill-timed

reserve. Then she swept queen-like past Marian and Aunt Clemmy, in her white dinner dress—the same dress that she had worn when she was Marian's bridesmaid—and walked quickly but composedly, as if nothing had happened, into the next bedroom.

The two negresses had already taken off Harry's coat and waistcoat, and laid him on the bed with his shirt front all saturated with blood, and his forehead still bleeding violently, in spite of their efforts to stanch it unskilfully with a wet towel. He was lying there, when Nora entered, stretched out at full length, speechless and senseless, the blood even then oozing slowly, by intermittent gurgling throbs, from the open gash across his right temple. There was another deeper and even worse wound gurgling similarly upon his left elbow.

‘They should have been here,’ Nora cried;

‘Marian and Clemmy should have been here, instead of looking after me, like fools, in yonder. —Is he dead, Nita? is he dead? Tell me!’

‘No, missy,’ the girl answered, passively handing her the soaked towel. ‘Him doan’t dead yet; but him dyin’, him dyin’. De blood comin’ out ob him, spurt, spurt, spurt, so him can’t lib long, not anyway. Him bledded to death already, I tinkin’, a’most.’

Nora looked at the white face, and a few tears began at last to form slowly in her brimming eyelids. But she brushed them away quickly, before they had time to trickle down her blanched cheek, for her proud West Indian blood was up now, as much as the negroes’ had been a few minutes earlier; and she twisted her handkerchief round a pocket pencil so as to form a hasty extemporised tourniquet, which she fastened bravely and

resolutely with intuitive skill above the open wound on the left elbow. She had never seen such a thing before, and she couldn't have said herself for the life of her how she knew it would prove useful. She had no idea, even, that the little jets in which the blood spurted out so rhythmically were indicative of that most dangerous wound, a severed artery ; but she felt instinctively, somehow, that this was the right thing to do, and she did it without flinching, as if she had been used to dealing familiarly with dangerous wounds for half her lifetime. Then she twisted the hasty instrument tightly round till the artery was securely stopped, and the little jets ceased entirely at each pulsation of the now feeble and weakened heart.

‘Run for the doctor, somebody!’ she cried eagerly ; ‘run for the doctor, or he’ll die outright before we can get help for him!’

But Nita and Rose, on their knees beside the wounded man, only cowered closer to the bedside, and shook with terror as another cry rose on a sudden from outside from the excited negroes. It was the cry they raised when they found Delgado was really struck dead before their very eyes by the visible and immediate judgment of the Almighty.

Nora looked down at them with profound contempt, and merely said, in her resolute, scornful voice: ‘What! afraid even of your own people? Why, I’m not afraid of them; I, who am a white woman, and whom they’d murder now and hack to pieces, as soon as they’d look at me, if once they could catch me, when their blood’s up!—Marian, Marian! you’re a white woman; will you come with me?’

Marian trembled a little—she wasn’t up-

held through that terrible scene by the ingrained hereditary pride of a superior race before the blind wrath of the inferior, bequeathed to Nora by her slave-owning ancestors; but she answered with hardly a moment's hesitation: 'Yes, Nora. If you wish it, I'll go with you.'

There is something in these conflicts of race with race which raises the women of the higher blood for the time being into something braver and stronger than women. In England, Marian would never have dared to go out alone in the face of such a raging tumultuous mob, even of white people; but in Trinidad, under the influence of that terrible excitement, she found heart to put on her hat once more, and step forth with Nora under the profound shade of the spreading mango-trees, now hardly lighted

up at all at fitful intervals by the dying glow from the burnt-out embers of the smoking cane-houses. They went down groping their way by the garden path, and came out at last upon the main bridle-road at the foot of the garden. There Marian drew back Nora timidly with a hand placed in quick warning upon her white shoulder. ‘Stand aside, dear,’ she whispered at her ear, pulling her back hastily within the garden gate and under the dark shadow of the big star-apple tree. ‘They’re coming down—they’re coming down! I hear them, I hear them! O God, O God, I shouldn’t have come away! They’ve killed Edward! My darling, my darling! They’ve killed him—they’ve killed him!’

‘I wouldn’t stand aside for myself,’ Nora answered half aloud, her eyes flashing proudly

even in the shadowy gloom of the garden. 'But to save Mr. Noel's life, to save his life, I'll stand aside if you wish, Marian.'

As they drew back into the dark shadow, even Nora trembling and shivering a little at the tramp of so many naked feet, some of the negroes passed close beside them outside the fence on their way down from the piazza, where they had just been electrified into sudden quietness by the awful sight of Louis Delgado's dead body. They were talking earnestly and low among themselves, not, as before, shrieking and yelling and gesticulating wildly, but conversing half below their breath in a solemn, mysterious, awestruck fashion.

'De Lard be praise for Mr. Hawthorn!'

one of them said as he passed unseen close beside them. 'Him de black man fren'. We

got nobody like him. I no' would hurt Mr. Hawthorn, de blessed man, not for de life ob me.'

Marian's heart beat fast within her, but she said never a word, and only pressed Nora's hand, which she held convulsively within her own, harder and tighter than ever, in her mute suspense and agony.

Presently another group passed close by, and another voice said tremulously: 'Louis Delgado dead—Louis Delgado dead! Mr. Hawthorn is wonderful man for true! Who'd have tought it, me brudder, who'd have tought it?'

'That's Martin Luther,' Nora cried almost aloud, unable any longer to retain her curiosity. 'I know him by his voice. He wouldn't hurt me.—Martin, Martin! what's that you're saying? Has Mr. Hawthorn shot

Delgado?’ As she spoke, with a fierce anticipatory triumph in her voice, she stepped out from the shadow of the gate on to the main bridle-path, in her white dress and with her pale face, clearly visible under the faint moonlight.

Martin flung up his arms like one stabbed to the heart, and shouted wildly: ‘De missy, de missy! Dem done killed her on de piazza yonder, and her duppy comin’ now already to scare us and trouble us!’

Even in that moment of awe and alarm, Nora laughed a little laugh of haughty contempt for the strong, big-built, hulking negro’s superstitious terror. ‘Martin!’ she cried, darting after him quickly, as he ran away awestruck, and catching him by the shoulder with her light but palpable human grasp, ‘don’t you know me? I’m no duppy.

It's me myself, Missy Nora, calling you. Here, feel my hand ; you see I'm alive still ; you see your people haven't killed me yet, even if you've killed your poor old master.— Martin, tell me, what's this you're all saying about Mr. Hawthorn having shot Delgado ?'

Martin, shaking violently in every limb, turned round and reassured himself slowly that it was really Nora and not her ghost that stood bodily before him. 'Ha, missy,' he answered good-humouredly, showing his great row of big white teeth, though still quaking visibly with terror, 'don't you be 'fraid ; we wouldn't hurt you, not a man of us. But it doan't Mr. Hawthorn dat shot Delgado ! It God Almighty ! De Lard hab smitten him !'

'What !' Nora cried in surprise. 'He fell dead ! Apoplexy or something, I suppose.

The old villain ! he deserved it, Martin.—And Mr. Hawthorn ? How about Mr. Hawthorn ? Have they hurt him ? Have they killed him ?’

‘ Mr. Hawtorn up to de house, missy, an’ all de niggers pray de Lard for true him lib for ebber, de blessed creature.’

‘ Why are you all coming away now, then ?’ Nora asked anxiously. ‘ Where are you going to ?’

‘ Mr. Hawtorn send us home,’ Martin answered submissively ; ‘ an’ we all ’fraid, if we doan’t go straight when him tell us, we drop down dead wit Kora, Datan, an’ Abiram, an’ lyin’ Ananias, same like Delgado.’

‘ Marian,’ Nora said decisively, ‘ go back to your husband. You ought to be with him. —Martin, you come along with me, sir. Mr. Noel’s dying. You’ve killed him, you people,

like you've killed my father. I've got to go and fetch the doctor now to save him ; and you've got to come with me and take care of me.'

'Oh, darling,' Marian interrupted nervously, 'you mustn't go alone amongst all these angry, excited negroes with nobody but him. Don't, don't ; I'll gladly go with you !'

'Do as I tell you !' Nora cried in a tone of authority, with a firm stamp of her petulant little foot. 'You ought to be with him. You mustn't leave him.—That's right, dear.—Now, then, Martin !'

'I 'fraid, missy.'

'Afraid ! Nonsense. You're a pack of cowards. Am *I* afraid ? and I'm a woman ! You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Come along with me at once, and do as I tell you.'

The terrified negro yielded grudgingly,

and crept after her in the true crouching African fashion, compelled against his will to follow implicitly the mere bidding of the stronger and more imperious nature.

They wound down the zigzag path together, under the gaunt shadows of the overhanging bamboo clumps, waving weirdly to and fro with the breeze in the feeble moonlight—the strong man slouching along timorously, shaking and starting with terror at every rustle of Nora's dress against the bracken and the tree ferns; the slight girl erect and fearless, walking a pace or two in front of her faint-hearted escort with proud self-reliance, and never pausing for a single second to cast a cautious glance to right or left among the tangled brushwood. The lights were now burning dimly in all the neighbouring negro cottages; and far away

down in the distance, the long rows of gas lamps at Port-of-Spain gleamed double with elongated oblique reflections in the calm water of the sleepy harbour.

They had got half-way down the lonely gully without meeting or passing a single soul, when, at a turn of the road where the bridle-path swept aside to avoid a rainy-season torrent, a horse came quickly upon them from in front, and the rapid click of a cocked pistol warned Nora of approaching danger.

‘Who goes there?’ cried a sharp voice with a marked Scotch accent from the gloom before her. ‘Stop this minute, or I’ll fire at you, you nigger!’

With a thrill of delight, Nora recognised the longed-for voice—the very one she was seeking. It was Dr. Macfarlane, from beyond the gully, roused, like half the island, by the

red glare from the Orange Grove cane-houses, and spurring up as fast as his horse could carry him, armed and on the alert, to the scene of the supposed insurrection.

‘Don’t shoot,’ Nora answered coolly, holding her hand up in deprecation. ‘A friend!—It’s me, Dr. Macfarlane—Nora Dupuy, coming to meet you.’

‘Miss Dupuy!’ the doctor cried in astonishment. ‘Then they’ll not have shot *you*, at any rate, young leddy! But what are you doing out here alone at this time o’ night, I’m wondering? Have you had to run for your life from Orange Grove from these cowardly insurgent nigger fellows?’

‘Run from *them*!’ Nora echoed contemptuously—‘run from *them*! Dr. Macfarlane, I’d like to see it. No, no; I’m too much of a Dupuy ever to do that, I promise you,

doctor. They can murder me, but they can't frighten me. I was coming down to look for you, for poor Mr. Noel, who's lying dangerously wounded up at our house, with a wound on the arm and a terrible cut across the temple.'

'Coming alone—just in the vera midst of all this business—to fetch me to look after a wounded fellow!' the doctor ejaculated half to himself, with mingled astonishment and admiration. 'Why, the devil himsel' must be in the lassie!' But he jumped down from his horse with a quick movement, not ungallantly, and lifted Nora up in his big arms without a word, seating her sideways, before she could remonstrate, on the awkward saddle. 'Sit you there, Miss Dupuy,' he said kindly. 'Ye're a brave lassie, if ever there was one. I'll hold his head, and run along

side wi' you. We'll be up at the house again in ten minutes.'

'They've killed my father,' Nora said simply, beginning to break down now at last, after her unnatural exaltation of bravery and endurance, and bursting into a sudden flood of tears. 'He's lying at home all hacked to pieces with their dreadful cutlasses; and Mr. Noel's almost dead too; perhaps he'll be quite dead, doctor, before we can get there.'

CHAPTER XLI.

WHEN Nora and the doctor reached the door of Orange Grove, they found Edward Hawthorn waiting to receive them, and the servants already busy trying to remove as far as possible the signs of the wreck so lately effected by the wild rioters. Several neighbouring planters, who had come down from the hills above, stood in armed groups around the gate ; and a few mounted black constables, hastily summoned to the spot by the fire, were helping to extinguish the smouldering ashes. Only Delgado's dead body lay untouched upon the sofa, stiff and motionless,

for not one of the negroes dare venture to set hands upon it; and in the room within Marian sat still, looking anxiously at Harry Noel's pallid face and livid eyelids, and his bloodstained shirt, that yet heaved faintly and almost imperceptibly upon his broad bosom at each long slow-drawn inspiration.

‘He isn’t dead yet?’ Nora asked, in a hushed voice of painful inquiry; and Marian answered under her breath, looking up at the bluff doctor: ‘No; he’s living still. He’s breathing quite regularly, though very feebly.’

As for Macfarlane, he went to work at once with the cool business-like precision and rapidity of his practised profession, opening the blood-stained shirt in front, and putting his hand in through the silk vest to feel the heart that still beat faintly and

evenly. ‘He’s lost a great deal of blood, no doubt, Mrs. Hawthorn,’ he said cheerily; ‘but he’s a strong mon, an’ he’ll pull through yet, ye needna fash yersel’—thanks to whoever poot this bit handkerchief around his arm here. It’s a guid enough tourniquet to use on an eemergency.—Was it you, Miss Dupuy, or Mrs. Hawthorn?’

A round spot of vivid colour flashed for a moment into Nora’s white cheek as she answered quietly: ‘It was me, Dr. Macfarlane!’ and then died out again as fast as it had come, when Macfarlane’s eyes were once more removed from her burning face.

‘Ye’re a brave lassie, an’ no mistake,’ the doctor went on, removing the tourniquet, and stanching the fresh flow rapidly with a proper bandage, produced with mechanical routine from his coat pocket. ‘Well, well, don’t be

afraid about him any longer. It's a big cut, an' a deep cut, an' it's just gone an' severed a guid big artery—an ugly business ; but ye've takken it in time ; an' your bandage has been most judeeciously applied ; so ye may rest assured that, with a little nursing, the young mon will soon be all right again, an' sound as ever. A cutlass is a nasty weepoon to get a wound from, because these nigger fellows don't sharpen them up to a clean edge, as they ought to do rightly, but just hack an' mutilate a mon in the most outrageous an' unbusiness-like manner, instead of killing him outright like guid Christians, with a neat, sharp, workman-like incesion. But we'll pull him through—we'll pull him through yet, I don't doubt it. An' if he lives, ye may have the pleasure of knowing, young leddy, that it was the tourniquet ye made

so cleverly that just saved him at the right moment.'

As Macfarlane finished dressing and tending Harry's wound, and Harry's eyes began to open again, slowly and glassily, for he was very faint with loss of blood, Nora, now that the excitement of that awful evening was fairly over, seemed at last to realise within herself her great loss with a sudden revulsion. Turning away passionately from Harry's bedside, she rushed into the next room, where the women-servants were already gathered around their master's body, keening and wailing as is their wont, with strange hymns and incoherent songs, wherein stray scraps of Hebrew psalms and Christian anthems are mingled incongruously with weird surviving reminiscences of African fetichism, and mystic symbols of aboriginal obeah. Fully awake now to the

blow that had fallen so suddenly upon her, Nora flung herself in fierce despair by her father's side, and kissed the speechless lips two or three times over with wild remorse in her fresh agony of distress and isolation. 'Father, father!' she cried aloud, in the self-same long-drawn wail as the negresses around her, 'they've killed you, they've killed you! my darling—my darling!'

'Dem kill you—dem kill you!' echoed Rose and Nita and the other women in their wailing sing-song. 'But de Lard ob hebbin himself avenge you. De grabe yawnin' wide dis ebenin' for Louis Delgado. De Lard smite him—de Lard smite him!'

'Get away, all you auld crones!' the doctor said, coming in upon them suddenly with his hearty Scotch voice, that seemed to break in too harshly on the weird solemnity

of the ghastly scene. ‘Let me see how it was they killed your master. He’s dead, you say—stone dead, is he? Let me see—let me see, then.—Here you, there—lift up his head, will you, lassie, and poot it down decently on the pillow!’

Nita did as she was told, mechanically, with a reproachful glance from her big white-fringed eyes at the too matter-of-fact and common-sense Scotchman, and then sat down again, squatting upon the floor, moaning and crouching piteously to herself, as decorum demanded of her under such circumstances.

The doctor looked closely at the clotted blood that hung in ugly tangles on the poor old man’s grey locks, and whistled a little in a dubious undertone to himself, when he saw the great gash that ran right across Mr. Dupuy’s left shoulder. ‘An awkward cut,’ he

said slowly—‘a vera severe an’ awkward cut, I don’t deny it. But I don’t precisely see, mysel’, why it need have positively killed him. The loss of blood needn’t have been so vera excessive. He’s hacked aboot terribly, puir auld gentleman, with their ugly cutlasses, though hardly enough to have done for a Dupuy, in my opeenion. They’re vera tough subjects indeed to kill, all the Dupuys are.’

As he spoke, he leant down cautiously over the body, and listened for a minute or two attentively with his ear at the heart and lips. Then he held his finger lightly with close scrutiny before the motionless nostrils, and shook his head once or twice in a very solemn and ominous fashion. ‘It’s a most singular fact,’ he said with slow deliberation, looking over at Edward, ‘and one full of important psychological implications that the

members of every nationality I have ever had to deal with in the whole course of my professional experience—except only the Scottish people—have a most illogical an' rideeculous habit of jumping at conclusions without suffeicient data to go upon. The mon's not dead at all, I tell you—de'il a bit of it. He's breathing still, breathing veesibly.'

Nora leapt up at the word with another sudden access of wild energy. 'Breathing!' she cried—'breathing, doctor! Then he'll live still. He'll get better again, will he, my darling?'

'Now ye're jumping at conclusions a second time most unwarrantably,' Macfarlane answered, with true Scotch caution. 'I will na say positively he'll get better again, for that's a question that rests entirely in the hands o' the Almichty. But I do

say the mon's breathing—not a doubt of it.'

The discovery inspired them all at once with fresh hope for Mr. Dupuy's safety. In a few minutes they had taken off his outer clothing and dressed his wounds; while Nora sat rocking herself to and fro excitedly in the American chair, her hands folded tight with interlacing fingers upon her lap, and her lips trembling with convulsive jerks, as she moaned in a low monotone to herself, between suspense and hope, after all the successive manifold terrors of that endless evening.

By-and-by the doctor turned to her kindly and gently. 'He'll do,' he said, in his most fatherly manner. 'Go to bed, lassie, go to bed, I tell ye. Why, ye're bruised an' beaten yersel' too, pretty awkwardly! Ye'll need rest. Go to bed; an' he'll be

better, we'll hope an' trust, to-morrow morning.'

'I won't go to bed,' Nora said firmly, 'as long as I don't know whether he will live or not, Dr. Macfarlane.'

'Why, my lassie, that'll be a vera long watch for ye, then, indeed, I promise you, for he'll no be well again for many a long day yet, I'm thinking. But he'll do, I don't doubt, with the Almichty's blessing. Go to bed, now, for there'll be plenty to guard you. Mr. Hawthorn an' I will stop here the nicht; an' there's neebors enough coming up every minute to hold the place against all the niggers in the whole of Treenidad. The country's roused now; the constabulary's alive; an' the governor 'll be sending up the meelitary shortly to tak care of us while you're sleeping. Go to bed at once, there's a guid lassie.'

Marian took her quietly by the arm and led her away, once more half fainting. ‘You’ll stop with me, dear?’ Nora whispered; and Marian answered with a kiss: ‘Yes, my darling; I’ll stop with you as long as you want me.’

‘Wait a minute,’ the good doctor called out after them. ‘Ye’ll need something short to mak’ ye sleep after all this excitement, I tak it, leddies. There’s nothing in the world so much recommended by the faculty under these condeetions as a guid stiff glass of auld Hieland whusky with a bit lime-juice an’ a lump o’ shoogar in it.—Ye’ll have some whusky in the house, no doubt, won’t you, Uncle Ezeekiel?’

In a minute or two, Uncle ‘Zekiel had brought the whisky and the glasses and the fruit for the bit lime-juice, and Macfarlane

had duly concocted what he considered as a proper dose for the ‘young leddies in their present posection.’ Edward noticed, too, that besides the whisky, the juice, and the sugar, he poured furtively into each glass a few drops from a small phial that he took out unperceived by all the others from his waistcoat pocket. And as soon as the two girls had gone off together, the doctor whispered to him confidentially, with all the air of a most profound conspirator: ‘The puir creatures wanted a little seddative to still their nerves, I conseeder, after all this unusual an’ upsetting excitement, so I’ve just takken the leebeerty to give them each a guid dose of morphia in their drap o’ whusky, that’ll mak’ them both sleep as sound as a bairn till to-morrow morning.’

But all that night, the negroes watched

and prayed loudly in their own huts with strange devotions, and the white men and the constables watched—with more oaths than prayers, after the white man's fashion—armed to the teeth around the open gate of Mr. Dupuy's front garden.

CHAPTER XLII.

NEXT morning, Tom Dupuy, Esquire, of Pimento Valley, Westmoreland, Trinidad, mounted his celebrated chestnut pony Sambo Gal at his own door, unchained his famous Cuban bloodhound Slot from his big kennel, and rode up, with cousinly and lover-like anxiety, to Orange Grove, to inquire after Nora's and her father's safety. Nora was up by the time he reached the house, pale and tired, and with a frightful headache; but she went to meet him at the front door, and dropped him a very low old-fashioned obeisance.

‘Good-morning, Tom Dupuy!’ she said coldly. ‘So you’ve come at last to look us up, have you? It’s very good of you, I’m sure, very good of you. They tell me you didn’t come last night, when half the gentlemen from all the country round rode up in hot haste with guns and pistols to take care of papa and me. But it’s very good of you, to be sure, now the danger’s well over, to come round in such a friendly fashion and drop us a card of kind inquiries.’

Even Tom Dupuy, born boor and fool as he was, flushed up crimson at that galling taunt from a woman’s lips, ‘Now that the danger’s well over.’ To do him justice, Tom Dupuy was indeed no coward; that was the one solitary vice of which no fighting Dupuy that ever lived could with justice be suspected for a moment. He would have faced and

fought a thousand black rioters singlehanded, like a thousand devils, himself, in defence of his beloved vacuum pans and dearly cherished saccharometers and boiling-houses. His devotion to molasses would no doubt have been proof against the very utmost terrors of death itself. But the truth is that exact devotion in question was the real cause of his apparent remissness on the previous evening. All night long, Tom Dupuy had been busy rousing and arming his immediate house-servants, despatching messengers to Port-of-Spain for the aid of the constabulary, and preparing to defend the cut canes with the very last drop of his blood and the very last breath in his stolid body. At the first sight of the conflagration at Orange Grove, he guessed at once that ‘the niggers had risen;’ and he proceeded without a moment’s delay

to fortify roughly Pimento Valley against the chance of a similar attack. Now that he came to look back calmly upon his heroic exertions, however, it did begin to strike him somewhat forcibly that he had perhaps shown himself slightly wanting in the affection of a cousin and the ardour of a lover. He bit his lip awkwardly for a second, with a sheepish look; then he glanced up suddenly and said with clumsy self-vindication: 'It isn't always those that deserve the best of you that get the best praise or thanks, in this world of ours, I fancy, Nora!'

'I fail to understand you,' Nora answered with quiet dignity.

'Why, just you look here, Nora; it's somehow like this, I tell you plainly. Here was I last night down at Pimento. I saw by the blaze that these nigger fellows must have

broken loose, and must be burning down the Orange Grove cane-houses ; so there I stopped all night long, working away as hard as I could work—no nigger could have worked harder—trying to protect your father's canes and the vacuum pans from these murdering, howling rebels. And now, when I come round here this morning to tell you, after having made sure the whole year's crop at old Pimento, one of your fine English flouts is all the thanks I get from you, miss, for my night's labour.'

Nora laughed—laughed in spite of herself—laughed aloud a simple, merry, girlish laugh of pure amusement—it was so comical. There they had all stood last night in imminent danger of their lives, and of what is dearer than life itself, surrounded by a frantic, yelling mob of half-demented, rum-maddened

negroes—her father left for dead upon the piazza steps, Harry Noel hacked to pieces with cutlasses before her very eyes, herself trampled under foot in her swoon upon the drawing-room floor by those naked soles of negro rioters—and now this morning, Cousin Tom comes up quietly when all was over to tell her at his ease how he had taken the most approved precautions for the protection of his beloved vacuum pans. Every time she thought of it, Nora laughed again, with a fresh little outburst of merry laughter, more and more vehemently, just as though her father were not at that very moment lying within between life and death, as still and motionless as a corpse, in his own bedroom.

There is nothing more fatal to the possible prospects of a suitor, however hopeless, than to be openly laughed at by the lady of his

choice at a critical moment—nothing more galling to a man under any circumstances than patent ridicule from a beautiful woman. Tom Dupuy grew redder and redder every minute, and stammered and stuttered in helpless speechlessness; and still Nora looked at him and laughed, ‘for all the world,’ he thought to himself, ‘as if I were just nobody else but the clown at the theatre.’

But that was not indeed the stage on which Tom Dupuy really performed the part of clown with such distinguished success in his unconscious personation.

‘How’s your father this morning?’ he asked at last gruffly, with an uneasy shuffle. ‘I hear the niggers cut him about awfully last night, and next door to killed him with their beastly cutlasses.’

Nora drew herself up and checked her

untimely laughter with a sudden sense of the demands of the situation, as she answered once more in her coldest tone: ‘My father is getting on as well as we can expect, thank you, Mr. Tom Dupuy. We are much obliged to you for your kind inquiries. He slept the night pretty well, all things considered, and is partially conscious again this morning. He was very nearly killed last night, as you say; and if it hadn’t been for Mr. Noel and Mr. Hawthorn, who kindly came up at once and tried to protect us, he would have been killed outright, and I with him. But Mr. Noel and Mr. Hawthorn had happily no vacuum pans and no trash-houses to engage their first and chief attention.’

Tom Dupuy sneered visibly. ‘Hm!’ he said. ‘Two coloured fellows! Upon my conscience! the Dupuys of Trinidad must be

coming down in the world, it seems, when they have to rely for help in a nigger rising upon two coloured fellows.'

'If they'd had to rely upon white men like you,' Nora answered angrily, flushing crimson as she spoke, 'they'd have been burnt last night upon the ashes of the cane-house, and not a soul would have stirred a hand or foot to save them or protect them.'

Tom laughed to himself a sharp, short, malicious laugh. 'Ha, ha!' he said, 'my fine English-bred lady, so that's the way the wind blows, is it? I may be a fool, and I know you think me one'—Nora bowed immediately a sarcastic acquiescence—'but I'm not such a fool as not to see through a woman's face into a woman's mind like an open window. I heard that that woolly-headed Hawthorn man had been over here

and made a most cowardly time-serving speech to the confounded niggers, giving way to all their preposterous demands in the most outrageous and ridiculous fashion ; but I didn't hear that the other coloured fellow—your fine-spoken English friend Noel'—he hissed the words out with all the concentrated strength of his impotent hatred—'had been up here too, to put his own finger into the pie when the crust was burning. Just like his impudence ! the conceited coxcomb !'

'Mr. Noel is lying inside, in our own house here, this very moment, dangerously wounded,' Nora cried, her face now like a crimson peony ; 'and he was cut down by negroes last night, standing up bravely, alone and single-handed, with no weapon but a little riding-whip, facing those mad rebels

like an angry tiger, and trying to protect me from their insults and their cutlasses; while you, sir, were stopping snugly away down at Pimento Valley, looking carefully after your canes and your vacuum pans. Tom Dupuy, if you dare to say another word, now or ever, in my hearing against the man who tried to save my life from those wild wretches at the risk of his own, as sure as I'm standing here, sir, I give you fair notice I'll come up and slap your face for you myself, as soon as I'll look at you, you cowardly back-biter!—And now, Mr. Dupuy, good-morning, good-morning.'

Tom saw the game was fairly up and his hand outwitted. It was no use arguing with her any longer. 'When she's in this humour,' he said to himself philosophically, 'you might as well try to reason with a

wounded lioness.' So he whistled carelessly for Slot to follow, lifted his hat as politely as he was able—he didn't pretend to all these fine new-fangled town-bred ways of Harry Noel's—jumped with awkward agility upon his chestnut pony, turned his horse's head in the direction of Pimento Valley, and delivered a parting Parthian shot from a safe distance, just as he got beyond the garden gateway. 'Good-by, Miss Nora,' he said then savagely, raising his hat a second time with sarcastic courtesy: 'good-by for ever. This is our last meeting. And remember that I always said you'd finish in the end, for all your fine English education, by marrying a damned woolly-headed brown man!'

CHAPTER XLIII.

ALL day long, Mr. Dupuy lay speechless and almost motionless on his bed, faint with loss of blood, and hovering between life and death, but gradually mending by imperceptible degrees, as Marian fancied. The brain had been terribly shaken, and there were some symptoms of stunning and concussion; but the main trouble was merely the excessive drain on the vascular system from the long-continued and unchecked bleeding. About mid-day, he became hot and feverish, with a full pulse, beating unsteadily. Macfarlane, who had remained in the house all

night, ordered him at once a rough mixture of sal-volatile, bismuth, and whisky. ‘An’ whatever ye do,’ he said emphatically, ‘don’t forget the whusky—a guid wine-glassful in half a pint o’ cold watter.’

Mr. Dupuy was raised in the bed to drink the mixture, which he swallowed mechanically in a half-unconscious fashion; and then a bandage of pounded ice was applied to his forehead, and leeches were hastily sent for to Port-of-Spain to reduce the inflammation. Long before the leeches had time to arrive, however, Nora, who was watching by his bedside, observed that his eyes began to open more frequently than before, and that gleams of reason seemed to come over them every now and again for brief intervals. ‘Give him some more whusky,’ Macfarlane said in his decided tone; ‘there’s nothing like it, nothing

like it—in these cases—especially for a mon of Dupuy's idioseencrasy.'

At that moment Mr. Dupuy's lips moved feebly, and he tried to turn with an effort on the pillow.

'Hush, hush!' Nora cried; 'he wants to speak. He has something to tell us. What is it he's saying? Listen, listen!'

Mr. Dupuy's lips moved again, and a faint voice proceeded slowly from the depths of his bosom: 'Not fit to hold a candle to old Trinidad rum, I tell you, doctor.'

Macfarlane rubbed his hand against his thigh with evident pleasure and satisfaction. 'He's wrong there,' he murmured, 'undoubtedly wrong, as every judeecious person could easily tell him; but no matter. He'll do now, when once he's got life enough left in him to contradict one. It always does a

Dupuy guid to contradict other people. Let it be rum, then—a guid wine-glassful of Mr. Tom's best stilling.'

Almost as soon as the rum was swallowed, Mr. Dupuy seemed to mend rapidly for the passing moment. He looked up and saw Nora. 'That's well, then,' he said with a sigh, recollecting suddenly the last night's adventures. 'So they didn't kill you, after all, Nora?'

Nora stooped down with unwonted tenderness and kissed him fervently. 'No, papa,' she said; 'they didn't; nor you either.'

Mr. Dupuy paused for a moment; then he looked up a second time, and asked, with extraordinary vehemence for an invalided man: 'Is this riot put down? Have they driven off the niggers? Have they taken the ring-leaders? Have they hanged Delgado?'

‘Hush, hush!’ Nora cried, a little appalled in her cooler mood, after all that had happened, at this first savage outcry for vengeance. ‘You mustn’t talk, papa; you mustn’t excite yourself. Yes, yes; the riot is put down, and Delgado—Delgado is dead. He has met with his due punishment.’

‘That’s well!’ Mr. Dupuy exclaimed, with much gusto, in spite of his weakness, rubbing his hands feebly underneath the bed-clothes. ‘Serves the villain right. I’m glad they’ve hanged him. Nothing on earth comes up to martial law in these emergencies; and hang ’em on the spot, say I, as fast as you catch ’em, red-handed! Flog ’em first, and hang ’em afterwards!’

Marian looked down at him speechless, with a shudder of horror; but Nora put her face between her hands, overwhelmed with

awe, now her own passion had burnt itself out, at that terrible outburst of the old bad barbaric spirit of retaliation. ‘Don’t let him talk so, dear,’ she cried to Marian. ‘Oh, Marian, Marian, I’m so ashamed of myself! I’m so ashamed of us all—us Dupuys, I mean; I wish we were all more like you and Mr. Hawthorn.’

‘You must na speak, Mr. Dupuy,’ Macfarlane said, interposing gently, with his rough-and-ready Scotch tenderness. ‘Ye’re not strong enough for conversation yet, I’m thinking. Ye must just tak’ a wee bit sleep till the fever’s better. Ye’ve had a narrow escape of your life, my guid sir; an’ ye must na excite yoursel’ the minute ye’re getting a trifle better.’

The old man lay silent for a few minutes longer; then he turned again to Nora, and

without noticing Marian's presence, said more vehemently and more viciously than ever : ' I know who set them on to this, Nora. It wasn't their own doing ; it was coloured instigation. They were put up to it—I know they were put up to it—by that scoundrel Hawthorn—a seditious, rascally, malevolent lawyer, if ever there was one. I hope they'll hang him too—he deserves it soundly—flog him and hang him as soon as they catch him ! '

' Oh, papa, papa ! ' Nora cried, growing hotter and redder in the face than ever, and clutching Marian's hand tightly in an agony of distress and shamefacedness, ' you don't know what you're saying ! You don't know what you owe to him ! It was Mr. Hawthorn who finally pacified and dispersed the negroes ; and if it hadn't been for his coolness

and his bravery, we wouldn't one of us have been alive to say so this very minute!'

Mr. Dupuy coughed uneasily, and muttered to himself once more in a vindictive undertone : ' Hang him when they catch him ! —hang him when they catch him ! I'll speak to the governor about it myself, and prove to him conclusively that if it hadn't been for this fellow Hawthorn, the niggers 'd never have dreamed of kicking up such an infernal hulla-baloo and bobbery !'

' But, papa,' Nora began again, her eyes full of tears, ' you don't understand. You're all wrong about it. If it hadn't been for that dear, good, brave Mr. Hawthorn——'

Marian touched her lightly on the shoulder. ' Never mind about it, Nora, darling,' she whispered consolingly, with a womanly caress to the poor shrinking girl at

her elbow ; ‘ don’t trouble him with the story now. By-and-by, when he’s better, he’ll come to hear the facts ; and then he’ll know what Edward’s part was in the whole matter. Don’t distress yourself about it, darling, now, after all that has happened. I know your father’s feelings too well to take amiss anything he may happen to say in the heat of the moment.

‘ If you speak another word before six o’clock to-night, Dupuy,’ Macfarlane put in with stern determination, ‘ I’ll just clear every soul that knows ye oot o’ the room at once, an’ leave ye alone to the tender mercies of old Aunt Clemmy. Turn over on your side, mon, when your doctor tells ye to, an’ try to get a little bit o’ refreshing sleep before the evening.’

Mr. Dupuy obeyed in a feeble fashion ;

but he still muttered doggedly to himself as he turned over : ‘ Catch him and hang him ! Prove it to the governor ! ’

As he spoke, Edward beckoned Marian out into the drawing-room through the open door, to show her a note which had just been brought to him by a mounted orderly. It was a few hasty lines, written in pencil that very morning by the governor himself, thanking Mr. Hawthorn in his official capacity for his brave and conciliatory conduct on the preceding evening, whereby a formidable and organised insurrection had been nipped in the bud, and a door left open for future inquiry, and redress of any possible just grievances on the part of the rioters and discontented negroes. ‘ It is to your firmness and address alone,’ the governor wrote, ‘ that the white population of the island of Trinidad owes to-

day its present security from fire and bloodshed.'

Meanwhile, preparations had been made for preventing any possible fresh outbreak of the riot that evening ; and soldiers and policemen were arriving every moment at the smouldering site of the recent fire, and forming a regular plan of defence against the remote chance of a second rising. Not that any such precautions were really necessary ; for the negroes, deprived of their head in Delgado, were left utterly without cohesion or organisation ; and Edward's promise to go to England and see that their grievances were properly ventilated had had far more effect upon their trustful and excitable natures than the display of ten regiments of soldiers in marching order could possibly have produced. The natural laziness of the negro

mind, combining with their confidence in the young judge, and their fervent faith in the justice of Providence under the most apparently incongruous circumstances, had made them all settle down at once into their usual listless *laissez-faire* condition, as soon as the spur of Delgado's fiery energy and exhortation had ceased to stimulate them. 'It all right,' they chattered passively among themselves. 'Mistah Hawthorn gwine to 'peak to Missis Queen fur de poor naygur; and de Lard in hebbin gwine to watch ober him, an' see him doan't suffer no more wrong at de heavy hand ob de proud buckra.'

When the time arrived to make preparations for the night's watching and nursing, Nora came to Marian once more with her spirit vexed by a sore trouble. 'My dear,' she said, 'this is a dreadful thing about poor

Mr. Noel having to go on stopping here. It's very unfortunate he couldn't have been nursed through his illness at your house or at Captain Castello's. He'll be down in bed for at least a week or two, in all probability; and it won't be possible to move him out of this until he's better.'

'Well, darling?' Marian answered, with an inquiring smile.

'Well, you see, Marian, it wouldn't be so awkward, of course, if poor papa wasn't ill too, because then, if I liked, I could go over and stop with you at Mulberry until Mr. Noel was quite recovered. But as I shall have to stay here, naturally, to nurse papa, why——'

'Why, what then, Nora?'

Nora hesitated. 'Why, you see, darling,' she went on timidly at last, 'people will say

that as I've helped to nurse Mr. Noel through a serious illness——'

‘Yes, dear?’

‘Oh, Marian, don't be so stupid! Of course, in that case, everybody'll expect me—to—to—accept him.’

Marian looked down deep into her simple, little, girlish eyes with a curious smile of arch womanliness. ‘And why not, Nora?’ she asked at last with perfect simplicity.

Nora blushed. ‘Marian—Marian—dear Marian,’ she said at length, after a long pause, ‘you are so good—you are so kind—you are so helpful to me. I wish I could say to you all I feel, but I can't; and even if I did, you couldn't understand it—you couldn't fathom it. You don't know what it is, Marian, to be born a West Indian with such a terrible load of surviving prejudices. Oh, darling, darling,

we are all so full of wicked, dreadful, unjust feelings ; I wish I could be like you, dear, I wish to heaven I could ; but I can't, I can't, I can't, somehow ! '

Marian stroked her white little hand with sisterly tenderness in perfect silence for a few minutes ; then she said, rather reproachfully : ' So you wish Mr. Noel wasn't going to be nursed under your father's roof at all, Nora ! That's a very poor return, isn't it, my darling, for all his bravery and heroism and devotion ? '

Nora drew back like one stung suddenly by a venomous creature, and putting her hand in haste on her breast, as if it pained her terribly, answered, with a deep-drawn sigh : ' It isn't that, Marian—isn't that, darling. You know what it is, dear, as well as I do. Don't say it's that, my sweet ; oh, don't say it's that, or you'll kill me, you'll kill me, with remorse

and anger! You'll make me hate myself, if you say I'm ungrateful. But I'm not ungrateful, Marian—I'm not ungrateful. I admire, and—and love him; yes, I love him, for the way he acted here last evening.' And as she spoke, she buried her head fervidly, with shame and fear, in Marian's bosom.

Marian smoothed her hair tenderly for a few minutes longer, this time again in profound silence, and then she spoke once more very softly, almost at Nora's ear, in a low whisper. 'I went this morning into Mr. Noel's room,' she said, 'darling, just when he was first beginning to recover consciousness; and as he saw me, he turned his eyes up to me with a beseeching look, and his lips seemed to be moving, as if he wanted ever so much to say something. So I stooped down and listened to catch the words he was trying to frame in

his feverish fashion. He said at first just two words—"Miss Dupuy;" and then he spoke again, and said one only—"Nora." I smiled, and nodded at him to tell him it was all well; and he spoke again, quite audibly: "Have they hurt her? Have they hurt her?" I said: "No; she's as well as I am!" and his eyes seemed to grow larger as I said it, and filled with tears; and I knew what he meant by them, Nora—I knew what he meant by them. A little later, he spoke to me again, and he said: "Mrs. Hawthorn, I may be dying; and if I die, tell her—tell Nora—that that last night, when she stood beside me there so bravely, I loved her, I loved her, I loved her better even than I had ever loved her!" He won't die, Nora; but still I'll break his confidence, darling, and tell it you this evening.—Oh, Nora, Nora! you say you wish to heaven

you hadn't got all these dreadful wicked West Indian feelings. You're brave enough—I know that—no woman braver. Why don't you have the courage to break through them, then, and come away with Edward and me to England, and accept poor Mr. Noel, who would gladly give his very life a thousand times over for you, darling ?'

Nora burst into tears once more, and nestled, sobbing, closer and closer upon Marian's shoulder. 'My darling, my darling,' she cried, 'I'm too, too wicked ! I only wish I could feel as you do !'

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE days went slowly, slowly on, and Mr. Dupuy and Harry Noel both continued to recover steadily from their severe injuries. Marian came over every day to help with the nursing, and took charge for the most part, with Aunt Clemmy's aid, of the young Englishman; while Nora's time was chiefly taken up in attending to her father's manifold necessities. Still at odd moments she did venture to help a little in taking care of poor Harry, whose gratitude for all her small attentions was absolutely unbounded, and very touching. True, she came comparatively seldom into

the sickroom (for such in fact it was, the crushing blow on Harry's head having been followed by violent symptoms of internal injury to the brain, which made his case far more serious in the end than Mr. Dupuy's); but whenever he awoke up after a short doze, in his intervals of pain, he always found a fresh passion-flower, or a sweet white rosebud, or a graceful spray of clambering Martinique clematis, carefully placed in a tiny vase with pure water on the little table by the bedside; and he knew well whose dainty fingers had picked the pretty blossoms and arranged them so deftly, with their delicate background of lace-like wild West Indian maiden-hair, in the tiny bouquets. More than once, too, when Aunt Clemmy wasn't looking, he took the white rosebuds out of the water for a single moment and gazed at them tenderly

with a wistful eye ; and when, one afternoon, Marian surprised him in the very act, as she came in with his regulation cup of chicken-broth at the half-hour, she saw that the colour rushed suddenly even into his brown and bloodless cheek, and his eyes fell like a boy's as he replaced the buds with a guilty look in the vase beside him. But she said nothing about the matter at the time, only reserving it for Nora's private delectation in the little boudoir half an hour later.

As Mr. Dupuy got better, one firm resolve seemed to have imprinted itself indelibly upon his unbending nature—the resolve to quit Trinidad for ever at the very earliest moment when convalescence and Macfarlane would combine to allow him. He would even sell Orange Grove itself, he said, and go over and live permanently for the rest of his days

in England. ‘That is to say, in England for the summer,’ he observed casually to Nora; ‘for I don’t suppose any human being in his right senses would ever dream of stopping in such a beastly climate through a whole dreary English winter. In October, I shall always go to Nice, or Pau, or Mentone, or some other of these new-fashioned continental wintering-places that people go to nowadays in Europe; some chance, I suppose, of seeing the sun once and again there, at any rate. But one thing I’ve quite decided upon: I won’t live any longer in Trinidad. I’m not afraid; but I object on principle to vivisection, especially conducted with a blunt instrument. At my time of life, a man naturally dislikes being cut up alive by those horrible cutlasses. You and your cousin Tom may stop here by yourselves and

manage Pimento Valley, if you choose; but I decline any longer to be used as the *corpus vile* for a nigger experimentalist to exercise his skill upon. It doesn't suit my taste, and I refuse to submit to it. The fact is, Nora, my dear, the island isn't any longer a fit place for a gentleman to live in. It was all very well in the old days, before we got a pack of Exeter Hall demagogues sent out here by the government of the day, on purpose to excite our own servants to rebellion and insurrection against us. Nobody ever heard of the niggers rising or hacking one to pieces bodily in those days. But ever since this man Hawthorn, whose wife you're so thick with—a thing that no lady would have dreamt of countenancing in the days before these new-fangled doctrines came into fashion—ever since this man Hawthorn was

sent out here, preaching his revolutionary cut-throat principles broadcast, the island hasn't been a fit place at all for a gentleman to live in; and I've made up my mind to leave it at once and go over to England.'

Meanwhile, events had arisen which rendered it certain that the revolutionary demagogue himself, who had saved Mr. Dupuy's life and all the other white lives in the entire island, would also have to go to England at a short notice. Edward had intended, indeed, in pursuance of his hasty promise to the excited negroes, to resign his judgeship and return home, in order to confer with the Colonial Office on the subject of their grievances. But before he had time to settle his affairs and make arrangements for his approaching departure, a brisk interchange of messages had taken place between the Trini-

dad government and the home authorities. Meetings had been held in London at which the whole matter had been thoroughly ventilated; questions had been asked and answered in Parliament; and the English papers had called unanimously for a thorough sifting of the relations between the planters and the labourers throughout the whole of the West India Islands. In particular, they had highly praised the courage and wisdom with which young Mr. Hawthorn had stepped into the breach at the critical moment, and single-handed, averted a general massacre, by his timely influence with the infuriated rioters. More than one paper had suggested that Mr. Hawthorn should be forthwith recalled, to give evidence on the subject before a Select Committee; and as a direct result of that suggestion, Edward shortly after received a

message from the Colonial Secretary, summoning him to London immediately, with all despatch, on business connected with the recent rising of the negroes in Trinidad.

Mr. Dupuy had already chosen the date on which he should sail; but when he heard that the man Hawthorn had actually taken a passage by the same steamer, he almost changed his mind, for the first time in his life, and half determined to remain in the island, now that it was to be freed at last from the polluting presence and influence of this terrible fire-eating brown revolutionist. Perhaps, he thought, when once Hawthorn was gone, Trinidad might yet be a place fit for a gentleman to live in. The Dupuys had inhabited Orange Grove, father and son, for nine generations; and it would be a pity indeed if they were to be driven away from

the ancestral plantations by the meddlesome interference of an upstart radical coloured lawyer.

In this dubitative frame of mind, then, Mr. Dupuy, as soon as ever Macfarlane would allow him to mount his horse again, rode slowly down from Orange Grove to pay a long-meditated call at Government House upon His Excellency the Governor. In black frock-coat and shiny silk hat, as is the rigorous etiquette upon such occasions, even under a blazing tropical noontide, he went his way with a full heart, ready to pour forth the vials of his wrath into the sympathetic ears of the Queen's representative against this wretched intriguer Hawthorn, by whose Machiavellian machinations (Mr. Dupuy was justly proud in his own mind of that sonorous alliteration) the happy and contented

peasantry of the island of Trinidad had been spurred and flogged and slowly roused into unwilling rebellion against their generous and paternal employers.

Judge of his amazement, therefore, when, after listening patiently to his long and fierce tirade, Sir Adalbert rose from his chair calmly, and said in a clear and distinct voice these incredible words: ‘Mr. Dupuy, you unfortunately quite mistake the whole nature of the situation. This abortive insurrection is not due to Mr. Hawthorn or to any other one person whatever. It has long been brewing; we have for months feared and anticipated it; and it is the outcome of a widespread and general discontent among the negroes themselves, sedulously fostered, we are afraid’—here Mr. Dupuy’s face began to brighten with joyous anticipation—‘by

the unwise and excessive severity of many planters, both in their public capacity as magistrates, and in their private capacity as employers of labour.' (Here Mr. Dupuy's face first fell blankly, and then pursed itself up suddenly in a perfectly comical expression of profound dismay and intense astonishment.)

'It is to Mr. Hawthorn alone,' the Governor went on, glancing severely at the astounded planter, 'that many unwise proprietors of estates in the island of Trinidad owe their escape from the not wholly unprovoked anger of the insurgent negroes; and so highly do the home authorities value Mr. Hawthorn's courage and judgment in this emergency, that they have just summoned him back to England, to aid them with his advice and experience in settling a new *modus vivendi* to be shortly introduced between negroes and employers.'

Mr. Dupuy never quite understood how he managed to reel out of the Governor's drawing-room without fainting, from sheer astonishment and horror ; or how he managed to restrain his legs from lifting up his toes automatically against the sacred person of the Queen's representative. But he did manage somehow to stagger down the steps in a dazed and stupefied fashion, much as he had staggered along the path when he felt Delgado hacking him about the body at the blazing cane-houses ; and he rode back home to Orange Grove, red in the face as an angry turkey-cock, more convinced than ever in his own mind that Trinidad was indeed no longer a fit place for any gentleman of breeding to live in. And in spite of Edward's having taken passage by the same ship, he determined to clear out of the island, bag

and baggage, at the earliest possible opportunity.

As for Harry Noel, he, too, had engaged a berth quite undesignedly in the self-same steamer. Even though he had rushed up to Orange Grove in the first flush of the danger, to protect Nora and her father, if possible, from the frantic rioters, it had of course been a very awkward position for him to find himself an unwilling and uninvited guest in the house which he had last quitted under such extremely unpleasant circumstances. Mr. Dupuy, indeed, though he admitted, when he heard the whole story, that Harry had no doubt behaved 'like a very decent young fellow,' could not be prevailed upon to take any notice of his unbidden presence, even by sending an occasional polite message of inquiry about his slow recovery from the

adjoining bedroom. So Harry was naturally anxious to get away from Orange Grove as quickly as possible, and he had made up his mind that before he went he would not again ask Nora to reconsider her determination. His chivalrous nature shrank from the very appearance of trading upon her gratitude for his brave efforts to save her on the evening of the outbreak; if she would not accept him for his own sake, she should not accept him for the sake of the risk he had run to win her.

The first day when Harry was permitted to move out under the shade of the big star-apple tree upon the little grass plot, where he sat in a cushioned bamboo chair beside the clump of waving cannas, Nora came upon him suddenly, as if by accident, from the Italian terrace, with a bunch of beautiful

pale-blue plumbago and a tall spike of scented tube-rose in her dainty, gloveless little fingers. ‘Aren’t they beautiful, Mr. Noel?’ she said, holding them up to his admiring gaze—admiring them, it must be confessed, a trifle obliquely. ‘Did you ever in your life see anything so wildly lovely in a stiff, tied-up, staircase conservatory over yonder in dear old England?’

‘Never,’ Harry Noel answered, with his eyes fixed rather on her blushing face than on the luscious pale white tube-rose. ‘I shall carry away with me always the most delightful reminiscences of beautiful Trinidad and of its lovely—flowers.’

Nora noticed at once the significant little pause before the last word, and blushed again, even deeper than ever. ‘Carry away with you?’ she said regretfully, echoing his

words—‘carry away with you? Then do you mean to leave the island immediately?’

‘Yes, Miss Dupuy—immediately; by the next steamer. I’ve written off this very morning to the agents at the harbour to engage my passage.’

Nora’s heart beat violently within her. ‘So soon!’ she said. ‘How very curious! And how very fortunate, too, for I believe papa has taken berths for himself and me by the very same steamer. He’s gone to-day to call on the Governor; and when he comes back, he’s going to decide at once whether or not we are to leave the island immediately for ever.’

‘Very fortunate? You said very fortunate? How very kind of you. Then you’re not altogether sorry, Miss Dupuy, that we’re going to be fellow-passengers together?’

‘Mr. Noel, Mr. Noel! How can you doubt it?’

Harry’s heart beat that moment almost as fast as Nora’s own. In spite of his good resolutions—which he had made so very firmly too—he couldn’t help ejaculating fervently: ‘Then you forgive me, Miss Dupuy! You let bygones be bygones! You’re not angry with me any longer!’

‘Angry with you, Mr. Noel—angry with you! You were so kind, you were so brave! How could I ever again be angry with you!’

Harry’s face fell somewhat. After all, then, it was only gratitude. ‘It’s very good of you to say so,’ he faltered out tremulously—‘very good of you to say so. I—I—I shall always remember—my—my visit to Orange Grove with the greatest pleasure.’

‘And so shall I,’ Nora added in a low voice, hardly breathing ; and as she spoke, the tears filled her eyes to overflowing.

Harry looked at her once more tenderly. How beautiful and fresh and dainty she was, really ! He looked at her, and longed just once to kiss her. Nora’s hand lay close to his. He put out his own fingers, very tentatively, and just touched it, almost as if by accident. Nora drew it half away, but not suddenly. He touched it again, a little more boldly this time, and Nora permitted him, unreproving. Then he looked hard into her averted tearful eyes, and said tenderly the one word, ‘Nora !’

Nora’s hand responded faintly by a slight pressure, but she answered nothing.

‘Nora,’ the young man cried again, with sudden energy, ‘if it is love, take me, take

me. But if it is only—only the recollection of that terrible night, let me go, let me go, for ever !’

Nora held his hand fast in hers with a tremulous grasp, and whispered in his ear, almost inaudibly : ‘ Mr. Noel, it is love—it is love ! I love you—I love you !’

When Macfarlane came his rounds that evening to see his patients he declared that Harry Noel’s pulse was decidedly feverish, and that he must have been somehow over-exciting himself ; so he ordered him back again ruthlessly to bed at once till further notice.

CHAPTER XLV.

WHEN Mr. Dupuy heard from his daughter's own lips the news of her engagement to Harry Noel, his wrath at first was absolutely unbounded; he stormed about the house, and raved and gesticulated. He refused ever to see Harry Noel again, or to admit of any proffered explanation, or to suffer Nora to attempt the defence of her own conduct. He was sure no defence was possible, and he wasn't going to listen to one either, whether or not. He even proposed to kick Harry out of doors forthwith for having thus taken advantage in the most abominable manner of

his very peculiar and unusual circumstances. Whatever came, he would never dream of allowing Nora to marry such an extremely ungentlemanly and mean-spirited fellow.

But Mr. Dupuy didn't sufficiently calculate upon the fact that in this matter he had another Dupuy to deal with, and that that other Dupuy had the indomitable family will quite as strongly developed within her as he himself had. Nora stuck bravely to her point with the utmost resolution. As long as she was not yet of age, she said, she would obey her father in all reasonable matters; but as soon as she was twenty-one, Orange Grove or no Orange Grove, she would marry Harry Noel outright, so that was the end of it. And having delivered herself squarely of this profound determination, she said not a word more upon the subject, but left events

to work out their own course in their own proper and natural fashion.

Now, Mr. Dupuy was an obstinate man ; but his obstinacy was of that vehement and demonstrative kind which grows fiercer and fiercer the more you say to it, but wears itself out, of pure inanition, when resolutely met by a firm and passive silent opposition. Though she was no psychologist, Nora had hit quite unconsciously and spontaneously upon this best possible line of action. She never attempted to contradict or gainsay her father, whenever he spoke to her angrily, in one of his passionate outbursts, against Harry Noel ; but she went her own way, quietly and unobtrusively, taking it for granted always, in a thousand little undemonstrative ways, that it was her obvious future rôle in life to marry at last her chosen lover. And

as water by continual dropping wears a hole finally in the hardest stone, so Nora by constant quiet side-hints made her father gradually understand that she would really have Harry Noel for a husband, and no other. Bit by bit, Mr. Dupuy gave way, sullenly and grudgingly, convinced in his own mind that the world was being rapidly turned topsy-turvy, and that it was no use for a plain, solid, straightforward old gentleman any longer to presume single-handed upon stemming the ever-increasing flood of revolutionary levelling sentiment. It was some solace to his soul, as he yielded slowly inch by inch, to think that if for once in his life he had had to yield, it was at least to a born Dupuy, and not to any pulpy, weak-minded outsider whatever.

So in the end, before the steamer was

ready to sail, he had been brought, not indeed to give his consent to Nora's marriage—for that was more than any one could reasonably have expected from a man of his character—but to recognise it somehow in an unofficial dogged fashion as quite inevitable. After all, the fellow was heir to a baronetcy, which is always an eminently respectable position; and his daughter in the end would be Lady Noel; and everybody said the young man had behaved admirably on the night of the riot; and over in England—well, over in England it's positively incredible how little right and proper feeling people have got upon these important racial matters.

‘But one thing I will *not* permit,’ Mr. Dupuy said with decisive curtness. ‘Whether you marry this person Noel, Nora, or whether you don't—a question on which it seems, in

this new-fangled order of things that's coming up nowadays, a father's feelings are not to be consulted—you shall not marry him here in Trinidad. I will not allow the grand old name and fame of the fighting Dupuys of Orange Grove to be dragged through the mud with any young man whatsoever, in this island. If you want to marry the man Noel, miss, you shall marry him in England, where nobody on earth will know anything at all about it.

‘Certainly, papa,’ Nora answered most demurely. ‘Mr. Noel would naturally prefer the wedding to take place in London, where his own family and friends could all be present; and besides, of course there wouldn’t be time to get one’s things ready either, before we leave the West Indies.’

When the next steamer was prepared to

sail, it carried away a large contingent of well-known residents from the island of Trinidad. On the deck, Edward and Marian Hawthorn stood waving their handkerchiefs energetically to their friends on the wharf, and to the great body of negroes who had assembled in full force to give a parting cheer to 'de black man fren', Mr. Hawthorn.' Harry Noel, in a folding cane-chair, sat beside them, still pale and ill, but bowing, it must be confessed, from time to time a rather ironical bow to his late assailants, at the cheers, which were really meant, of course, for his more popular friend and travelling companion. Close by stood Nora, not sorry in her heart that she was to see the last that day of the land of her fathers, where she had suffered so terribly and dared so much. And close by, too, on the seat beside the gunwale,

sat Mr. and Mrs. Hawthorn the elder, induced at last, by Edward's earnest solicitation, to quit Trinidad for the evening of their days, and come to live hard by his own new home in the mother country. As for Mr. Dupuy, he had no patience with the open way in which that man Hawthorn was waving his adieux so abominably to his fellow-conspirators; so, by way of escaping from the unwelcome demonstration, he was quietly ensconced below in a corner of the saloon, enjoying a last parting cigar and a brandy cocktail with some of his old planter cronies, who were going back to shore by-and-by in the pilot boat. As a body, the little party downstairs were all agreed that when a man like our friend Dupuy here was positively driven out of the island by coloured agitators, Trinidad was no longer a place fit for any

gentleman with the slightest self-respect to live in. The effect of this solemn declaration was only imperceptibly marred by the well-known fact that it had been announced with equal profundity of conviction, at intervals of about six months each, by ten generations of old Trinidad planters, ever since the earliest foundation of the Spanish colony in that island.

Just two months later, Mr. Dupuy was seated alone at his solitary lunch in the London club to which Harry Noel had temporarily introduced him as an honorary guest. It was the morning after Nora's wedding, and Mr. Dupuy was feeling naturally somewhat dull and lonely in that great unsympathetic world of London. His attention, however, was suddenly attracted by two young men at a neighbouring table, one of whom distinctly

mentioned in an audible tone his new son-in-law's name, 'Harry Noel.' The master of Orange Grove drew himself up stiffly and listened with much curiosity to such scraps as he could manage to catch of their flippant conversation.

'Oh, yes,' one of them was saying, 'a very smart affair indeed, I can tell you. Old Sir Walter and Lady Noel down there from Lincolnshire, and half the smartest people in London at the wedding breakfast. Very fine fellow, Noel, and comes in to one of the finest estates in the whole of England. Pretty little woman, too, the bride—nice little girl, with such winning little baby features.'

'Ah, ha!' drawled out the other slowly. 'Pretty, is she? Ah, really. And, pray, who was she?'

Mr. Dupuy's bosom swelled with not un-

natural paternal pride and pleasure as he anticipated the prompt answer from the wedding guest: 'One of the fighting Dupuys of Trinidad.'

But instead of replying in that perfectly reasonable and intelligible fashion, the young man at the club responded slowly: 'Well, upon my word, I don't exactly know who she was, but somebody colonial, any way, I'm certain. I fancy from Hong-kong, or Penang, or Demerara, or somewhere.—No; Trinidad—I remember now—it was certainly either St. Kitts or Trinidad. Oh, Trinidad, of course, for Mrs. Hawthorn, you know—Miss Ord that was—wife of that awfully clever Cambridge fellow Hawthorn, who's just been appointed to a permanent something-or-other-ship at the Colonial Office—Mrs. Hawthorn knew her when she was out

there during that nigger row they've just been having; and she pointed me out the bride's father, a snuffy-looking old gentleman in the sugar-planting line, over in those parts, as far as I understood her. Old gentleman looked horribly out of it among so many smart London people. Horizon apparently quite limited by rum and sugar.—Oh, yes, it was a great catch for her, of course, I needn't tell you; but I understand this was the whole story of it. She angled for him very cleverly; and, by Jove, she hooked him at last, and played him well, and now she's landed him and fairly cooked him. It appears, he went out there not long before this insurrection business began, to look after some property they have in the island, and he stopped with her father, who, I dare say, was accustomed to dispensing a sort of rough-and-ready co-

lonial hospitality to all comers, gentle and simple. When the row came, the snuffy old gentleman in the sugar-planting line, as luck would have it, was the very first man whose house was attacked—didn't pay his niggers regularly, they tell me; and this young lady, posing herself directly behind poor Noel, compelled him, out of pure politeness, being a chivalrous sort of man, to fight for her life, and beat off the niggers single-handed for half an hour or so. Then he gets cut down, it seems, with an ugly cutlass wound: she falls fainting upon his body, for all the world like a Surrey melodrama; Hawthorn rushes in with drawn pistol and strikes an attitude; and the curtain falls: tableau. At last, Hawthorn manages to disperse the niggers; and my young lady has the agreeable task of nursing Noel at her father's house,

through a slow convalescence. Deuced clever, of course : makes him save her life first, and then she helps to save his. Has him both ways, you see—devotion and gratitude. So, as I say, she lands him promptly : and the consequence is, after a proper interval, this smart affair that came off yesterday over at St. George's.'

Once more the world reeled visibly before Mr. Dupuy's eyes, and he rose up from that hospitable club table, leaving his mutton cutlet and tomato sauce almost untasted. In the heat of the moment, he was half inclined to go back again immediately to his native Trinidad, and brave the terrors of vivisection, rather than stop in this atrocious, new-fangled, upsetting England, where the family honours of the fighting Dupuys of Orange Grove were positively reckoned at less than

nothing. He restrained himself, however, with a violent effort, and still condescends, from summer to summer, fitfully to inhabit this chilly, damp, and unappreciative island. But it is noticeable that he talks much less frequently now of the Dupuy characteristics than he did formerly (the population of Great Britain being evidently rather bored than otherwise by his constant allusions to those remarkable idiosyncrasies); and some of his acquaintances have even observed that since the late baronet's lamented decease, a few months since, he has spoken more than once with apparent pride and delight of 'my son-in-law, Sir Harry Noel.'

It is a great consolation to Tom Dupuy to this day, whenever anybody happens casually to mention his cousin Nora in his presence, that he can rub his hands gently one over

the other before him, and murmur in his own peculiar drawl: ‘I always told you she’d end at last by marrying some confounded woolly-headed brown man.’

THE END.

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